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GENUINE

AND

SPURIOUS RELIGION.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

GENUINE

AND

SPURIOUS RELIGION:

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A COMPENDIOUS,
SCRIPTURAL AND CONSECUTIVE VIEW OF THE ORIGIN,
DEVELOPMENT, AND CHARACTER OF DIFFERENT
SYSTEMS OF BELIEF.

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BY THE

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"Ἐχομεν δὲ τὸν θησαυρὸν τοῦτον ἐν ὀστρακίνοις σκεύεσιν.—2 Cor. iv. 7.

Si tamen in eo erraverim et amice de errore monear, seu publice seu privatim, aures præbebo: in hoc unum intentus, ut hi aliique labores mei cedant ad triumphum veritatis et fidei Evangelicæ, ultimumque finem omnium actionum nostrarum gloriam solius et unius veri Dei, Patris, Filii et Spiritus Sancti.

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GENUINE

AND

SPURIOUS RELIGION.

CHAPTER I.

NATURAL RELIGION CONSIDERED WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO OCCIDENTAL PAGANISM, AND THE SPECIFIC RESULTS OF PHILOSOPHICAL SPECULATION IN MATTERS OF RELIGION.

1. It is only the Oriental Pantheon which has survived the general shock which the spread of the Christian Religion has imparted to the stupendous fabric of Paganism. It is a wise, moral, and practical sentence, in which the acute female Tamul philosopher Avyar recommends her disciples not to pursue a conquered enemy. Yet we consider it still wiser, in the present instance, to take a passing glance at those huge ruins of mighty systems of Paganism which have given up the ghost, and yielded the triumph to the Christian Religion. A cursory view of the western

branch of Paganism, which once included the mythological systems of Egypt, Greece, Rome, and Germany, will not only convince us of the poverty of natural Religion amongst the Pagans, but at the same time inspire our hope of the final destruction of the spurious systems of belief in the East.

Whilst the Babylonian superstition, as "the mother of harlots," became the parent of the Persian, Hindoo, and Chinese Mythologies in the east and the south, and of the Scandinavian Religions towards the north-west, there was another of these polluted streams winding its meandering course in a westerly direction, towards Syria, Egypt, and the shores of the Mediterranean.

The country where these fragments of primitive Paganism were first arrested, and speedily developed under the genial influence of the nature of the land and the character of the people, was the remarkable country of Egypt.

The Mythology of Egypt was thus neither derived from the Brahminical system, nor yet was Hinduism the offspring of the spurious Religion of Egypt. Nor was the supposed influence of one upon the other at a subsequent period more than one of the dreams of a prolific imagination. On the contrary, both systems derive their origin historically from one and the same fountain. Hinduism was developed in India, the creed of the ancient Egyptians in Egypt; and the striking analogy between both Mythologies is not

peculiar to India and Egypt only, but, in a measure, to all Pagan systems. If all have started with the same elements of primitive tradition and primitive Paganism, there must needs be some affinity between them.

If human speculation would only have been guided by the blessed light of divine revelation, which alone can give support and consistency to those fragmentary glimpses by which general history has feebly endeavoured to remove the utter darkness from the ages of remote antiquity, much ingenuity and labour of thought might have been better employed, than by theorizing without end, and speculating without measure, as to which of the two creeds was the parent of the other.

The several theories which have made the Egyptian or the Hindoo Mythology the parent of all other spurious systems of belief, have been severally resulting from partial information. How often it has been the case, that, in the course of zealous inquiry, all is made subservient in the argument to some favourite system of the author! In whatever man feels deeply interested, whatever has been made a special object of his study and research, that subject is very easily exalted to an undue elevation. Hence, it is natural, for instance, that the student of Egyptian antiquities and Egyptian Mythology feels tempted to derive all from his favourite subject. And the student who has more exclusively occupied his attention with Persia, or

India, or China, will be tempted, in his way, to solve all things by reference to the darling subject of his particular inquiry. Has it not, indeed, happened that some of the most eminent scholars in Mythology have not scrupled to derive from the Egyptian creed not only every other form of spurious worship, but even the Theocratical constitution of the Israel of God?

Before we, however, venture to express an opinion on the merits of the Mythology of Egypt, and the character of Religion in that remarkable country, it will be necessary to give a cursory view of this system of religious belief. The Egyptians have done much. The stupendous monuments of arts and of physical power which still exist, attract the curiosity and command the admiration of this highly civilized age of the world. The writer is convinced, from his observation during a repeated sojourn in Egypt, that no descriptive powers will ever succeed in doing justice to the grandeur of the architectural conceptions of the ancient Egyptians. Every visitor may well use the words of the Queen of Sheba respecting the great nation of the ancient Egyptians: "It was a true report that I heard in mine own land of thy arts, and of thy wisdom, oh, land of Egypt! howbeit I believed not the words until I came, and mine own eyes had seen; and, behold, the half was not told me; thy wisdom and prosperity exceedeth the fame which I heard." But let us look what this energetic and civilized nation has accomplished without immediate revelation in religious

matters. Let us shortly examine what was the character of natural Religion amongst them.

The Egyptian Mythology, like all other systems of spurious Religion, started with the remnants of Monotheism, as the primitive belief of the human race. The deity, according to the books of Hermes, can only be revealed to those who desire to be like him. He is without colour, without figure, without change, beyond the reach of sense, and can only be known by revelation. He governs all things by his will; every thing is dependent on him. He is eternal; Nature is his image; being himself unknown, he reveals all things, in order that he should be known from his creation. He is without name; it is difficult to know him, and impossible to pronounce his character. He has only two names; he is *Father* and *Kindness*. Upon considering the world, we find that *One* must have created it; hence, there is only one God.

But these and similar fragments of religious truth were only known to those who were initiated into the mysteries. Some of the attributes of this Supreme Deity were subsequently conferred upon the deities of inferior ranks, of which we have several in the Egyptian Mythology. The foundation of Egyptian Polytheism was laid by two pairs of divinities; *Kneph* and *Neith*, *Sevek* and *Pasht*.

Kneph, in the Egyptian tongue, signifies *Spirit;* and his spouse, the great mother *Neith*, is the primal Matter. And whilst Spirit and Matter were considered

One pair of deities, *Sevek*, or Infinite Time, and *Pasht*, or Infinite Space, formed another pair of divinities.

Neith, as the primeval chaos, was uncreated, eternal, and embodied all the elements of life. She is represented as holding the symbol of water in her hands; and in an inscription at Sais, she declares of herself, "*I am all that was, and is, and shall be!*" whilst *Kneph* was looked upon as the great unknown God, or as *Amun-Kneph*, as the great unknown Spirit; the meaning of *Amun* being "hidden, unknown, secret." Sevech, or Sevek, the Grecian Kronos, is declared to be a masculine deity, which existed before the sun and the heavenly bodies. As infinite time, or as "Time without bound," he was considered a good as well as an evil deity, inasmuch as time not only produces all manner of things, but likewise destroys them again. As Sevek was, therefore, considered to be the author of evil, the Egyptians recognised the first cause of moral and physical evil in one of the members of the Supreme Deity. His wife was *Pasht*, or infinite space, with which was associated the idea of darkness. She was, indeed, expressly styled *Kake*, or *Chebe*, which signifies darkness. *Pasht*, therefore, seemed a fit associate to her husband *Sevek*, who was of an indifferent character.

In these four divinities, therefore, Egyptian speculation had united the germs of all the future elements of good and evil, of procreation and destruction. From this uncreated double pair of divini-

ties, all things now in existence have derived their origin by a process of nature. The idea of a creation out of nothing, is foreign to the natural Religion of the Egyptians. The visible things have been produced from something which has before existed. There being no essential difference between the nature of the world and its productive cause, the idea of an allwise and omnipotent Providence is equally foreign to their religious notions. Spirit and matter, Kneph and Neith, are, according to their views, of the same substance. The world is the visible godhead, the manifestation of the unknown deity *Amun*. But the universe was formed only gradually, and after long intervals of time.

According to the system of the Egyptians, there emanated from the two primal pair of divinites, three ranks of deities; the first consist of eight in number, and although they were produced, and therefore secondary beings, in contradistinction to the parent divinities, they yet occupy a prominent place in the Egyptian Mythology. As they were called into existence only by degrees, the Egyptians were not backward in filling up the intervals of time by an extravagant chronology. According to the fashion of all ancient nations, they commence the history of their country with the creation of the world; and the deities which were first made were likewise considered to have been the first rulers of their land, which was naturally regarded as the centre of the world.

The first of these eight divinities was *Pan*, or Phan, or Phanes, which signifies *the emanated god*. He is also styled the second Kneph, the father of gods, the father of the sun; whilst Neith was called the mother of gods, and the mother of the sun. Pan is also styled *Harseph*, the producing deity; or *Monthu*, Menth, the creator, and *Hik*, or Hake, which signifies *Lord*.

This second Kneph, *Pan*, produced *Phtah*, the primal fire; and from this and the mundane spirit Pan, we must expect all future creations. The mundane egg, which had emanated from the mouth of Kneph Amun, now bursts into two halves; from the more refined particles is produced the third of the eight divinities, the goddess *Pe*, or the firmament above; whilst the ruder mass afforded the elements from which *Anuke*, the goddess of the earth, was formed. Both the goddess *Pe*, and the goddess *Anuke*, are called the daughters of Neith. The earth, however, was as yet void and without form during this *first period* of creation. There was as yet no sun, but *Phtah* illuminated the world without interruption. And there being no days or nights, no numbers of the duration of this period could be given.

At the commencement of the second period, the combined efforts of Pan and Neith produced the solar deity *Re*. As *Pe* and *Anuke* were considered the emanations of Neith, *Re* is now introduced as the *Sha-mise*, or as the first-born among the gods. The second son of Pan and Neith was the lunar deity,

Joh-Thot, or *Chonsu*, the ruler of the month. If some of the Grecian authors make the deity of the moon to be of feminine gender, we must ascribe this mistake to their own habit of viewing the moon, with most other nations, as a female deity. It arose partly also from the inclination of the later writers of that nation, in which they confounded the more ancient deities of the Egyptians with *Osiris* and *Isis;* and as they made *Osiris* to be the solar deity, so *Isis* was surely to be the goddess of the moon. And it is, doubtless, from these mistaken representations, that similar notions in modern works on Egyptian Mythology have been copied. The two sons, therefore, which were born unto *Pan*, by *Neith*, the mother of the gods, were *Re* and *Joh*, the sun and the moon.

When the second *Kneph*, *Pan*, was united to the goddess *Pasht*, she brought forth the pair of goddesses *Sate* and *Athor*, or *Hathor*. *Sate* was the illuminated upper half of infinite space; but *Hathor*, the second daughter, was the lower region, which was considered dark. *Hathor* signifies the house of the solar deity, in which he reposes and hides his face from the world. *Sate* signifies the shining and bright goddess; she is often called the mistress of the heavens, and the queen of all the gods. *Hathor*, therefore, took upon her the nature of her mother *Pasht*, who was also called darkness.

Amongst these eight deities, the sun was considered by far the most important. The solar deity was directly called *Amun-Re*. As author and regulator of

time, he was likewise considered to be a personification of Sevek, and called *Sevek-ke*. He was likewise taken for his father Pan; and in being called Amun-Re, he is as often taken for the second Kneph as for the primal deity. As the first-born among the gods, and as the representative of the first and second Kneph, the solar deity is called *Horus*, which signifies exactly the contrary to Amun. *Amun* means "unknown and hidden;" *Horus*, "manifested and revealed." This *Horus* is, however, not to be confounded with the son of Isis, who appeared in human form, and belonged to the class of mortal deities. The solar deity is generally mentioned with the attribute of *Hor-hat*, or Horus of the north; because Heliopolis, the chief sanctuary of the solar deity, was in the north of Egypt, or in the Delta of the Nile. He is also *Thot-trismegistos*, the "three times great" deity, who is the guardian of the upper and the lower regions by his apparent revolutions.

The second rank amongst the eight deities is given to the lunar deity *Joh*, or *Chonsu*. Whilst *Re*, or *Horus*, is styled the "three times great" deity, *Joh* is called *Thot-dismegas*, the "two times" great divinity. The name *Joh* signifies his bright and shining character. He is the creator of the heavenly waters, and the productive cause of the nightly dew. He is at the same time the fountain of all wisdom and knowledge, by whom the sacred books are to be communicated to the Egyptians.

In the first period of the creation were produced Pan, and Phtah, and Pe, and Anuke. During the second period were brought into existence Re and Joh, the sun and the moon; Sate and Hathor, light and darkness. Pan and Phtah, or the mundane spirit and fire, emanated from the primal deity, Kneph. Pe and Anuke, the firmament and the earth, were the daughters of Neith. Re and Joh, the sun and the moon, were the sons of Sevek. Hathor and Sate, night and darkness, were the daughters of Pasht. At the commencement of the third period of creation, Pan formed the country of *Egypt*, as the centre of the world. And when the earth was thus adorned, the four primal deities, Kneph and Neith, Sevek and Pasht, descended into Egypt, and were embodied in visible forms. As all their fictitious gods were brought into connexion with the sun, so now with the river Nile, or Okeanos, as it is called in the Egyptian tongue. Kneph is turned into Okeanos, and his spouse into Okeame. As the Nile, also, was the regulator of time and season by his inundations, he was also considered as the offspring of Sevek. He now becomes *Seb*, or Kronos. Pasht also finally appears, and, under the name of *Reto*, protects the land of Egypt.

In addition to these four descendants from the great deities, we have eight more from the eight divinities of the first class of Egyptian gods. And thus the second rank of deities are now exactly twelve in number; and these are *Okeanos* and *Nepte*;

Seb-Kronos and *Reto; Imuteph* and *Nehimeu; Mui* and *Taphne; Thot-Hermes* and *Seph,* or *Chaseph; Pharmuti* and *Tme.* The first class of deities began their career twenty-three thousand, and the second, seventeen thousand years before Amasis. And now follows the third rank of deities, which were born fifteen thousand years before Amasis. In contradistinction to the first and second class, they are called the *mortal* divinities. This third generation consists chiefly of the brothers and sisters of *Osiris* and *Isis,* and their posterity.

Osiris, Arueris, Typhon, Isis, Nephthys, and *Shai,* were severally the children of Nepte, or Okeame, the mother of gods. The fathers, however, were different characters. *Osiris* and *Arueris* were the sons of the solar deity. *Isis* was the daughter of *Joh-Thot,* the godhead of the moon. *Typhon* and *Nephthys* are the children of *Seb-Kronos.* It was, therefore, only by degrees that Osiris and his sister and spouse, Isis, gained their celebrity in the Egyptian Mythology. As the older divinities receded on the mythological horizon, the younger deities advanced in the estimation of the nation. Osiris gradually assumed the place of Amun-Kneph, the great unknown Spirit, and also the honourable distinction of his father, the solar deity, Re. Isis, the daughter of the moon and the great goddess Neith, or Okeame, received the honours of her mother and grandmother. Typhon the "adversary" is substituted for his grandfather and

father, Sevek and Seb-Kronos. Typhon is a name, or rather a surname, which never appears in the hieroglyphical writings, so far as they have been deciphered. It is probably derived from a root of the Egyptian language, which signifies the "enemy;" and this *nomen appellativum* was probably added to his proper name, *Bore* or *Seth*, after he had subsequently shown himself the fierce adversary of Osiris. Like his father and grandfather, Typhon was not absolutely of an evil nature; he had his priests, and temples, and oracles, at the beginning, like his brothers and sisters. It was only after his opposition to Osiris that he was more and more considered of an evil nature; and towards the end of the Egyptian Mythology he was considered as the principle of evil. It was in this latter period that the distinguishing mark in his name was destroyed, especially in some of the temples. It was found to be against the national feeling that *Bore*, or *Ombte-Seth*, should be the same person with Typhon, the adversary of Osiris. As Osiris was the follower of Amun-Re, and Isis of Neith-Okeame, and Typhon of Sevek-Seb, so Nephthys finally succeeded the goddess Pasht.

Whilst the gods increased and multiplied upon earth, the earth also, or the goddess Anuke, is represented to have produced *Apophi*, or giants. This was the golden age of the history of Egypt, in which Okeanos was sovereign amongst the gods that inhabited the land. No evil was yet upon the world.

But Kronos put an end to this happy state of

things. He brought discord amongst the gods and spirits, and, supported by the children of Anuke, (the giants which had sprung from the earth,) commenced an open war against the army of the gods. As the chief leader of the *Apophi*, or the giants of the earth, Seb-Kronos is called himself Apophis. In the hieroglyphical representations, he is always represented as a giant, or as a *serpent*. That the giants before us are the giants of Gen. vi. 4, is apparent from the whole context of the legend. The giants of the Genesis are translated in the Koptic version by the word *Apopi*. *Arueris*, or *Horus*, called the elder, in contradistinction to the son of Osiris, is *seen standing upon the head of a gigantic serpent*, over which is written the name *Apophis*. Also Osiris, the brother of Arueris, is represented as fighting against *Apophis* in the form of a *serpent*. And the name of *Apophis* is always given with the figurative sign of a serpent, which has been pierced by the daggers of the gods. No one will fail to recognise the *old serpent* of Genesis, the bruising of its head by the woman's seed, and the scenes of the wicked giants as the serpent's seed prior to the flood. Again, as the two families of Cain and Seth were closely related to each other, so was also Apophis to the benevolent deities. The confusion of ideas is peculiar to all the remnants of ancient history in Pagan Mythology.

This war between the giants and the gods has been also the subject of the songs of Hesiod. Titans in

the Koptic language signifies fighting persons, and would therefore have reference to the army of gods. And as Kronos with his giants is subdued in the Grecian song by the Titans, so also Apophis with his giants at last falls before the gods, and, being drowned in the water, they are banished into Tartarus. That there has been a mighty flood, which has cleansed the earth from the rebellious and tyrannical giants, is sufficiently clear from the Egyptian Mythology; but a detailed account of the flood, by which the war of the gods was successfully terminated, has not yet been discovered. In order to show that Bore-Seth, or Typhon, was not yet the adversary of everything that is good, it may be mentioned that he, as the god of war, was engaged with the deities against *Apophis*, and that the latter fell by his hand!

In order to atone and purify the fallen spirits, which were tempted by *Apophis* to rebel against the gods, the solar deity Horus, or *Thot-trismegistos, mixed water with the dust of the ground, and Amun Kneph, the great Spirit, fashioned from this material human bodies, as their future abodes.* The account which Eusebius gives of this work of the deity is confirmed by hieroglyphical representations at Philæ, which exhibit the scene of the human bodies being framed from clay by the supreme Kneph. A number of the fallen spirits were now united to these frames of clay, and this is the origin and the creation of the human race, according to the natural Religion of Egypt.

The newly-created family of man was now placed under the direct guidance and superintendence of the twelve deities of the second, as well as under the patronage of the third class of deities, who severally instructed them in arts and sciences of all kinds. *Thot-Hermes* is the founder and patron of the priesthood; and he transmitted to them the sacred books, the contents of which had been already, before the flood, engraven upon tablets of stone by the solar deity Thot-trismegistos, and which were afterwards translated into the Egyptian language by the lunar deity Thot-Dismegas. Chaseph, the wife of Thot-Hermes, is always represented as aiding her husband in his benevolent work. *Imuteph* is the god of medicine, and *Nehimeu*, his spouse, aided him in the same way as Hermes was supported by Chaseph. The god *Mui*, and his wife *Taphne*, are the patrons of poetry and music. *Pharmuti* and *Tme* were the pair of deities which superintended justice and jurisprudence. *Osiris* was the deity which introduced the cultivation of wine. *Isis* was the protectress of agriculture. *Ombte-Seth*, or *Typhon*, was the god of war, who instructed the kings according to the hieroglyphics in the use of arms. *Nephthys* finally superintended the art of building houses, and was the protectress of the family, as was Hestia among the Greeks.

When the foundation of the civil, social, and religious life amongst the Egyptians was thus laid, Osiris leaves home upon a warlike expedition, upon which he

was accompanied, amongst others, by Arueris his elder brother, and by Anubis his son, who was born to him by Nephthys, but adopted by Isis. The country was left in charge of Isis and her two children, *Horus* and *Bubastis*, or *Anath*. They were to be supported by Seth or Typhon, and by Thot-Hermes. During the absence of Osiris, his brother Bore-Seth became his "adversary," or Typhon, and endeavoured to destroy his children. Isis brought them under the protection of the goddess *Reto*, that they might be safe from the intrigues of their uncle. But Typhon succeeded in killing his brother upon his return. The body of Osiris was put into a coffin and thrown into the Nile, which carried it down into the Mediterranean sea; and from it, was thrown on shore at Tyrus. Typhon was now sovereign of Egypt. After the death of Osiris, Isis gave birth to another son, *Harpokrates*, which signifies in the Egyptian and Koptic languages the "*infantine Horus;*" not to be confounded with Horus who was left with his mother upon the departure of Osiris. And as much has been fabled in ancient and modern days as to the cause of the "infantine Horus" being always represented with his finger on his mouth, we may add, that it is peculiar to the Egyptian hieroglyphical representation of an unweaned child.

After her confinement, the widowed goddess wanders about in despair in search of her husband's body; and when she found it at last at Tyrus, she brought

it back to Egypt. But Typhon cut it into pieces, and scattered the parts in every direction. She collected them again, with the exception of one member, which had been swallowed by the fishes, whence the Egyptians abstained from eating fish. Whilst Osiris in the meantime was made king in Hades, his son Horus meditated to revenge the death of his father. Making war against Typhon, Horus was killed, but restored to life by his mother. And at last Isis and Horus at Ombos succeeded in killing Typhon; hence the name of the former of Persephatta or "killer of Typhon." Isis was now Queen of Egypt till her death. Her disappearance from earth was ascribed to Osiris having beguiled her into Hades.

Isis was succeeded in the government of Egypt by her son Horus. And as the eight succeeding sovereigns were looked upon as demi-gods, Horus was the last of the divinites which ruled in the country. The mortal deities had disappeared, and the Egyptians showed their tombs!

The twelve deities of the second rank took up their abodes in the twelve signs of the zodiac. The others inhabited the sun, the moon, and the ancient five planets. As they ruled upon earth, so now in the heavenly bodies; and what was more natural to the Egyptian, than to lift up his eyes to the host of heaven, as the abodes and visible bodies of his gods? Astronomy and astrology were now the chief part in their creed. Like the Chaldeans, they wearied them-

selves in the multitude of the counsels of their astrologers, their monthly prognosticators, their enchanters, and sorcerers. (Isa. xliv.) Every month, every day, and every hour in the Egyptian almanac had its presiding deity among the heavenly host. Every occurrence in human life, from the hour of birth to the hour of death, was considered to depend upon the motion and position of the host of heaven. Before a marriage, or a journey, or a cure, or a war, or a lawsuit could be undertaken, the position of the stars was to be consulted. The very members and parts of the human body were placed under different sidereal divinities. And thus it came to pass that the Egyptians, according to Herodotus, observed more signs than all other nations put together.

When one of the guilty spirits descends upon earth to assume a human body, in order to expiate the crime committed during a former existence, he passes through the signs of the zodiac, and his disposition, his character and fate, will entirely depend upon the influence of the stars under which he enters the world. Hence the importance of the constellations at the hour of birth.

Before they are re-admitted into the heavenly abodes, the spirits are to descend upon death into the lower regions, to be examined and judged by the deities which are to judge the dead. These are forty-two in number, of whom Osiris is chief-justice. The departed soul is represented kneeling before them.

And then commences the solemn act of weighing the sins in the balances. In one of the scales is placed a vessel containing the heart of man; in the other scale is a small image of Tme, the goddess of justice. Horus watches one part, and Anubis the other part of the balances. Upon the top of the balances is Thot, superintending the whole transaction. Near the balances is stationed the lunar deity with pen and a tablet, ready to note down the result. And Osiris, accompanied by Isis and Nephthys, pronounces the final judgment.

The whole of this graphic representation is given with much spirit in the subterraneous tombs of the kings at Thebes. The spirit which has been found righteous ascends to the regions of solar and lunar deities; yea, to the highest heaven, which is inhabited by Phtah and Neith. The obituary, which was generally placed with the dead in the Sarcophaguses, and which is explanatory of the sculptures, informs us that the whole is concluded by prayers to the primal deity, the great spirit Amun-Kneph. If found wanting, the human soul is doomed for three thousand years to transmigrate through all the animal forms upon the earth, and in the waters, and in the air, before it again is able to obtain a human body.

Partly the idea that all creatures are of the same nature with the deity, partly the just-mentioned principle of transmigration of the human soul through animal forms, partly the hieroglyphical mode of representing deities by animal forms, together with other

considerations, may have induced the Egyptians to create animal gods to an extent which throws even the extravagance of the Hindu mythology into the shade. The hieroglyphical mode of writing, as is well known, uses all manner of figures and forms. The goddess Neith, *e.g.* appears with a weaver's shuttle over her head, not because she was the patron of that trade, but because that emblem in the Egyptian tongue is called Net, and signifies at the same time the letter N in the alphabet of the hieroglyphics. Isis is represented with a throne or chair, because this convenience is called Ese. Okeame is symbolised by a shield, which is called Okham. The goddess Me is represented with an ostrich's feather on her head; but this feather signifies the letter M in the hieroglyphical alphabet. The deity Seb-kronos has a goose, but the Egyptian word for goose has reference to the initial letter of the godhead's name. A certain vessel is associated with Nepte, because the initial letter of the name of the vessel was N. Kneph and Phtah are symbolised by the beetle Scarabæus, which was the symbol of production. Pasht, Sate, and Hathor, as the guardians of the orbits of the heavenly bodies, have an eye placed over their head. At last, animal forms were directly used as names of the deities. And when they were accustomed to see certain animals associated with certain deities, the animals themselves were conceived to be sacred to them. The Ibis, for instance, was invariably used to represent the lunar deity, Joh or

Chonsu. Ibis was called *Chib* in the Egyptian tongue, and the initials of the bird were the initials of the deity. Sevek is represented as a crocodile; the mundane spirit Pan, by a ram; Anubis, the guardian of the gods, as a dog. Re, the solar deity, by the sphinx, which represents a lion, with the head of a human being. The cow was sacred to Isis; the bull to Osiris and to Horus; the ass to Typhon; the cat to Bubastis.

In this manner Egypt was converted into a domicile of holy animals, which were the reflections of the deities which inhabited the zodiac and other heavenly bodies; or the animal figures which imagination had engraven upon the vault of heaven. Of all the animals, the ox kind received the highest honours. When one of the holy cows died, its carcase was reverentially thrown into the sacred stream. The bulls were buried with much ceremony, and after the flesh had been decayed, a boat was sent from Prosopitis with people, whose office it was to exhume the bones, and to bury them at Atarbechis. To kill any of these animals was a capital crime. The Egyptian Mythology, in short, assumed emphatically a *bestial* character. It was a *beastly Religion*. The worship of animals at last choked every better element in their Religion; it predominated even over the worship of the heavenly bodies and the elemental deities. The pompous and grotesque religious processions of this highly celebrated nation excited the admiration of the

beholders; but the admiration was turned into ridicule on beholding the objects of their devotions. It was remarked by Clemens and Origen, that those who visted Egypt approached with delight its sacred groves and splendid temples, adorned with superb vestibules and lofty porticos, the scenes of many solemn and mysterious rites. But, upon inquiry for the image of the deity, the priest lifts up the veil, and shows to the anxious inquirer a *snake*, a *crocodile*, a *cat*, or some other *ugly beast!*

The Religion of one of the most ancient and most polished nations was therefore, strictly speaking, *material, elemental, physical, astronomical, astrological, animal*, and *beastly*, destitute of any spiritual element! The animal world was placed above man, and made an object of adoration. How reverse to the laws of God, whom they were to seek in the works of his hand! What a mockery of his command, "*to subdue the earth, and to have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.*" GOD IS NOT MOCKED. Because that, when the wise Egyptians knew God, and glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened; professing themselves to be wise, they became fools; for fools only could change the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like unto corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things!

wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts. The sensual character of their religious observances, in which Religion hallowed vice, has excited the displeasure of Pagan writers.

It will be an easy matter now to form an impartial judgment of the merits of the natural Religion of the ancient Egyptians. We have seen how small has been the amount of religious truth which was discovered by the wisdom of a nation, whose early development of intellectual powers we are taught to admire from our childhood. We might now leave the matter, and proceed to some other branch of spurious Religion; had not some of our home-bred Pagans shown sufficient courage to spread the erroneous notion, as if the Theocratical constitution of Israel had been derived by Moses from the Mythology of ancient Egypt! There is something remarkable in this great anxiety of that school of infidels to deprive, if possible, the Christian Religion of its original character. The elements of true Religion are at one time derived from the Persian fire-worship of Central Asia, and at another from the Egyptian Mythology! It will not be superfluous to add a few more remarks, to show how unfounded is the supposition of Moses having embodied any of the Pagan elements of the Mythology of Egypt. The Persian creed we found to have plagiarized some of the leading articles of revealed Religion. The Egyptian creed contains nothing worthy of being

derived from so pure a source as that of immediate revelation. On the other hand, true Religion borrowed none of the spurious elements of the Egyptian Mythology.

We have already, on a previous occasion, alluded to the essential difference of Pagan symbols and those of the Theocratical constitution; and we have there shown how true Religion created its own symbolical forms, and that, if coincidences should even happen in some few instances, it would yet by no means prove the necessity to assume that one was derived from the other; their signification being totally different in both cases.

If we refer, in the first instance, to the tabernacle and the temple of Jehovah, we find that both are different in their plan, construction, and character, from the temples of the ancient Egyptians. The latter are clearly representations of the physical universe; the writer will never forget the ornamental roofs of these sanctuaries, which to this day are painted blue, and interspersed with stars, with the signs of the zodiac, and other astronomical figures; whilst the great pillars which support the roof are ornamented in their beautiful chapiters with green festoons. The tabernacle of Israel partakes of the *symbolical* character of all ancient temples and places of worship; and it would be surprising if it stood single amongst the sacred buildings of antiquity in this respect. It was, indeed, the object of primitive Religion to subdue and

counteract the symbol in its spurious character, by the introduction of the genuine symbol. But Jehovah, whom the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain, admonished Moses when he was about to make the tabernacle, "See that thou make all things according to the pattern shown thee in the mount." The pattern, therefore, was a heavenly one, and not the physical world, which served as an example to the ancient Egyptians in building their temples. The heavens were divided by the Egyptians into thirty-six provinces, and thus also the land of Egypt. Every province in the nightly hemisphere has its sacred animal, which is kept in a corresponding temple in the several provinces of the country. All the Egyptian temples collectively, were a type of the physical heavens, and Egypt itself, again, was a temple full of sacred animals.

Both the tabernacle of Israel, and the Egyptian temples, have certain divisions and measures, by which all is regulated. The former was divided into three parts, the most holy, the holy, and the court. Not one of the many temples of Egypt has, strictly speaking, the above division; nor is there the remotest idea of the relation of the several apartments one to another, which we find in the former. And as the tabernacle of Israel was no copy from the Egyptian temples in its general outlines, much less in its very minute arrangements. Yet, if it should even have happened, that the temples of Egypt had actually the threefold

division of the temple of Jehovah, it would by no means follow that it was borrowed from them, inasmuch as all Pagan nations know of sacred triads in divine things. The Egyptians divided the world into three divisions, and likewise their own country; and if this division could be found in their temples, it would have been founded upon mere physical ideas, of which the Mosaic Religion knows nothing. The Roman temples were divided into three apartments, but they had yet as little similarity with the tabernacle of Moses, as with the temples of Egypt. The palace of the emperor of China, and that of Montezuma, in Mexico, have the threefold division, which the Egyptian temples have not, yet no one will charge Moses with having taken his model from them.

If the tabernacle of Moses had assumed a character which had not been symbolical, it would have denied its antique character, and withholden something from Israel, which was necessary in those days. But amongst all the sacred buildings of Pagan antiquity, which bear the symbolical character, those of Egypt and Nubia, which are boldly stated to have been the models of the tabernacle and the temple, *are less similar than others!* This is extremely unfortunate for the argument of those people who consider that Moses derived all his models from the land of Egypt! The divisions, and measures, and numbers of Pagan temples, as temples of natural Religion in its spurious form, have severally reference to physical ideas, those

of the tabernacle to heavenly and spiritual things,—hence the very common numbers of thirty-six, and three hundred and sixty-five, are totally wanting. And after an examination of very many of the sacred buildings of the most important countries of the East, we maintain, without fear of contradiction, that the Pagan temples of different nations have more analogy between themselves, than all Pagan temples together have in common with the temple of Jehovah!

The question, again, whether the ark of the covenant and the mercy-seat be derived from Egyptian ideas, is fraught with the deepest interest; inasmuch as *they* seem to be the very centre of the Mosaic constitution. With the originality of these things, therefore, stands or falls likewise the original character of the religious system of the Israelites. And as there was nothing in their system which has been more boldly asserted to be of a genuine Egyptian character, we cannot leave the subject without making a few passing remarks upon it. We have already on a former occasion made the observation, that almost all ancient nations had amongst them sacred cases, and we at once admit that they also existed amongst the Egyptians. According to Plutarch, the death of Osiris was commemorated in the month of Athyr, or November, when the water of the sacred Nile had retired to its lowest ebb, and the length of days also was on the decline. On the nineteenth of this month, the

priests carried a holy ark to the sea, in which was placed a golden vessel, containing Nile water. A representation of this procession is yet found in temples at Karnak, and at Philæ. Now, this has been believed by some learned antiquaries to be the model upon which the ark of the covenant was framed. There were amongst the Egyptians other sacred arks, which contained the holy animals, which had been embalmed; the coffin of Osiris was another; and Synesius speaks of holy arks which contained globular bodies. According to Pausanias, a holy ark was captured at Ilium, which contained an image of Osiris; and according to Clemens Alexandrinus, there were others, which contained the Phallus of Osiris. Upon the same authority, we know that the sacred arks which were used by the Egyptians at their ceremonials, contained Sesamen, Pyramids, gourds, cakes, salt, serpents, pomegranates, hearts, umbels, ivy, poppies, and combs. All these things were symbols of the productive powers of nature, and were used in connexion with the worship of their physical deities.

Baal-Chammon, again, or the Moloch of the Phœnicians, was known to the Egyptians under the name of Chom; and his image was preserved at Papremis in a golden ark. In the arks of this deity were, moreover, preserved the *arcana* or *secreta Chaldæorum*. And what were the mysterious treasures which were shut up in these holy arks? In the Phœnician temples

of Baal-Chammon were preserved the burned bones of the deity Chom. In Tyrus, also, they had a similar treasure, which was kept in the temple, but brought upon a sacred boat, which was to accompany the Phœnician fleet in the time of war. But the legend of the bones of the deity being deposited in the holy ark, although analogous to what has been above observed respecting the office of Osiris, seems very questionable in this instance, for several reasons; and, to judge from other accounts respecting the rites of this deity among the Arabs and other Semitic nations, it seems more than probable that these golden cases or arks contained the bones of children, who were sacrificed to this god! If the remains of these victims were thus deposited in sacred arks, we can easily explain what Ammian relates of the golden ark of Baal-Chammon at Seleucia, near Babel, when he declares, that when a Roman soldier, under Marcus Antonius, had opened the same, the plague seized upon him, and spread as far as the Rhine and Gallia! "Milites fanum scrutantes invenere foramen angustum: quo reserato, ut pretiosum aliquid invenirent, ex adyto quodam concluso a Chaldæorum arcanis labes primordialis exilivit, qua insanabilium vi concepta morborum ejusdem Veri et Marci Antonii temporibus ab ipsis Persarum finibus adusque Rhenum et Gallias cuncta contagiis polluebat et mortibus." It will, indeed, require a moral infection, originating from a far more corrupting source than the mouldering mass of these sacred arks, which will

insist upon the ark of the covenant having been derived from such abominable and disgusting objects!

We have already contrasted the contents of these holy arks with those which were deposited in the ark of the covenant, on a former occasion. The Egyptian arks were closed, as containing mysteries which should only be known to the priesthood. The ark of Israel had actually no cover, nor did it contain any thing besides the Law of Jehovah, which was known to the meanest member of the camp of Israel. It was the published Law of Jehovah, and the ark was merely the depository of the same. And if it be true, that the Egyptian arks be severally copies of the coffin of Osiris, as we are distinctly told, what fellowship has the coffin of a mortal deity with the depository of the Law of Jehovah? Was it necessary for the servant of God to copy these disgraceful arks, in order to frame a depository for the documents which contained the words of the covenant of the God of Israel? Captain Cook discovered a holy ark amongst the inhabitants of the South Sea Islands, which was called "*Juharre no Ito,*" or the House of God. Why did it never occur to these philosophers, that Moses might have copied it from them rather, as it contained neither plants, nor fruits, nor flowers, nor holy animals, nor the remains of a mortal deity, as those of the ancient Egyptians? And then, where is the *mercy-seat* of the Egyptian arks, which was connected with the ark of the covenant, and to which, as the

chief thing, the ark itself seemed merely to serve as a support? To every one that has taken the least trouble to study the Egyptian Mythology, it will be clear, that the ideas of reconciliation, of mercy, and of sanctification, which were connected with the mercy-seat, were entirely unknown in this system of spurious belief. And it follows, therefore, that the ark of the covenant was originally part of the furniture of the tabernacle of Israel; and that the idea of its having been borrowed from the Egyptian arks, is based upon a notoriously false and impious hypothesis, which has no shadow of support in its favour.

As, however, the *form* of the ark of the covenant seems to have bred the idea of its being copied from Egyptian monuments, we must speak a word upon that subject before we dismiss it. The form of the Egyptian ark is that of a boat, the rudder of which is ornamented, in the temple at Karnak, with the head of a ram; at Philæ, we recognise the head of Isis. In the midst is raised something in the form of an altar, which is considered to be the holy ark of which Plutarch speaks in his work. It is twice as high as it is broad, not having a flat but an angular top. On the front side of the ark, not on the top, are seen the usual Egyptian figures, with wings, and which signify, in all probability, the four primal deities, Kneph and Neith, Sevek and Pasht. The whole boat also is covered with other mythological figures; most of which, as also the winged double pair of figures

on the front side of the ark, carry globes as the emblems of heavenly bodies. The whole boat is carried on poles by four rows of priests, each row consisting of ten men. It is acknowledged that the chief figure is that of the boat, which is a frequent symbol amongst the Egyptians, but never occurs in the Mosaical constitution. The ark itself is in form and figure exactly the reverse of the ark of the covenant, which was not narrow and lofty, like that placed in the boat, but long and low. The mercy-seat, as the chief part of the ark, is entirely wanting. The upper part of the Egyptian ark was so formed, that nothing could be placed upon it. The figures which are placed on the front-side of the ark in the boat, are those which occur everywhere on the walls of the temples and on other monuments, and have no other similarity with the forms of the cherubim over the mercy-seat than that they are winged. But winged figures of animals we discover amongst the Hindoos, Persians, Chinese, and Babylonians. In short, the Egyptian ark is in every point so different from the ark of the covenant, that only motives of a sinister kind could have influenced men of reflection and learning to pronounce the latter to be a copy from the former.

No other analogy seems left than the poles and the priestly bearers. If we think of the migrating character of the sanctuary of Israel, this also will appear very natural. All other holy things belonging to the

tabernacle were carried in the same manner. When the writer was travelling in Arabia, he observed the natives carrying even smaller things, such as boxes, bags, and parcels upon poles! And, as the most natural mode of carriage, it is in use all over the East. We might, with the same propriety, derive the mode of carrying our dead to the burial-ground from the Egyptian boat, of which the mode of carrying the ark in the wilderness is considered an imitation. The carrying of the boat was in itself a religious ceremony; but no one will consider the *conveyance* of the ark of the covenant through the desert to have been a religious rite.

We admit that the sacred arks of the Greeks and Romans were derived from those of Egypt; because we know that to be the case. But who will fancy Moses to model the ark of the covenant after the coffin of an Egyptian deity? The originality of the holy ark, with its significant seat of mercy, stands, therefore, unimpeached, whether we consider its form, or its contents, or its symbolical character. The Egyptian idolatry was, like all other mis-worship, an abomination to Jehovah; and he would not even borrow from it any of the forms of his divine constitution. If no one shows a mind to deprive the Egyptian, the Hindoo, or Persian Mythology of their original character, why should people be so anxious to deny this character to the sanctuary and the several rites of Israel? Why not *suum cuique?*

The organization of the Jewish *priesthood* was considered to be a faithful copy of the priestly caste of ancient Egypt. Now, from what we know of this caste, they studied the laws of Nature, the position and motion of the heavenly bodies, and were known as magicians, soothsayers, conjurors, astrologers, and sorcerers,—men who were put to death in Israel. Their occupation was chiefly natural philosophy, mathematics, music, literature, astronomy, zoology, medicine, botany, and architecture. Hence the different classes, which are mentioned by Clemens Alexandrinus. In describing a procession of the priesthood of Isis, he speaks of the singer, who bears a symbol of music in his hand. He is followed by the horoscopus, who carries in his hand the horologium and the palm-branch, as symbols of astrology. The astrological priest is succeeded by the scribe, whose knowledge consists in the understanding of the hieroglyphics, the laws of the heavenly bodies, the geography of the land, and the ornaments of the temple. Then follows the keeper of the sacred garments belonging to the temple service; and he again is succeeded by the maker of oracles, who was at the same time the steward of the priestly revenues, and the guardian of the laws respecting the gods of the nation. And finally, he mentions the Pastophori, the bearers of images and holy arks in public processions. These last also swept the temples, and acted in the capacity of physicians. How different the occupation

of the priests of Jehovah, who were to teach the Law to the people, and make reconciliation for their sins! Who can prove that the tribe of Levi was engaged in any one branch of knowledge which was cultivated by the Egyptian priesthood? These knew nothing of the mediatorial office of the priests of Jehovah.

As every other branch in the Mosaic constitution, so also the priesthood was to be appointed by Jehovah himself. His choice fell upon one tribe of the royal priesthood. The existence of the priestly tribe as a separate class was, however, peculiar neither to Egypt nor to Israel; for we have the same in India, Babylonia and Persia. As there were priestly castes in spurious Religions, there was to be also a priesthood in genuine Religion. Again; notwithstanding the separation of a special tribe for the ministry, it was not the irrevocable decree of an impersonal fate which overruled the whole, but the living God, who says: "It shall come to pass that the man's rod, whom I shall choose, shall blossom." Again; whilst the priestly caste was not permitted to intermarry with other people, the Levites married wives from other tribes; and, in cases of necessity, non-Levites were permitted to officiate in sacred things. The Levites were by no means above other tribes, whom they were to instruct; but the Egyptian priesthood were Lords over the people. If the priests in Israel had been in this position, the prophets could never have succeeded in maintaining

their influence. And as the Egyptians soon lost the idea of the divine unity, they were equally ignorant of the office of high-priest, who acted as one mediator between God and man. Every temple had its own deity; and every deity its own priests. And if the priests of each deity had a high priest, there were, naturally, as many high-priests in Egypt as gods. Who will recognise the model of the priesthood of Jehovah, in the priesthood of the astronomical, elemental, and bestial deities of the ancient Egyptians?

Another item in the constitution of the Israelites, which has been said to have been derived from Egypt, is the official *garments* of the priesthood. As regards the colour of the priestly habit, we observe, that it was white amongst all ancient nations. The Roman priests wore black when they were about to sacrifice to the gods of the lower regions. And as no one ever has considered black a fit symbol for purity and light, we should expect that Jewish priests also should be dressed in white garments. That, however, the Egyptian priests were dressed in white Byssus garments, had its special reason in its having been the pure production of the "*immortal earth*," and on account of its being particularly sacred to Osiris and Isis. If, therefore, there had been no other priesthood than those of Israel and Egypt which wore white garments, still we could not speak of the former having been copied from the latter, as the idea connected with them amongst the Egyptians was foreign to the

Mosaic constitution. That white garments, however, were not used only by the priests in Egypt will clearly appear from Gen. xli. 42. If, however, the fine linen of Egypt was proverbial amongst Israel, (Prov. vii. 16); if, moreover, the Jews procured the linen for their priests from Egypt; if it was worn in that country not only by the priests, but by small and great, we cannot conceive how it could follow from these things, that the priestly garments were copied from the Egyptians.

But, in order to disprove this arbitrary supposition, we refer to the different parts of the sacred vestments. Let us look at the bearers of the holy boat: they are clothed only from their loins to their feet. But the Jewish priest was habited in a coat with sleeves, from his neck down to his very heels. Again, a French artist has given some twenty-seven kinds of caps and bonnets, which are worn by the figures on the walls of the remains in Egypt; and no one will be able to recognise in any one of them the bonnet or the mitre of the Jewish priest. Again, it was positively forbidden for a Jewish priest to uncover his head, or to have it shaved, (Lev. xxi.) whilst the Egyptian priests were called "*calvi*," and had their heads shaved. The girdle has always been used in the East, and it was called by the Persians, the crown of garments! Now, we have a girdle of needlework as part of the priestly garment of the Israelitish priest. But, unfortunately for the cause of those whom we oppose, this item does

not exist among the garments of the ancient Egyptians, whilst all other nations have it. It cannot, therefore, have been derived from Egypt. Again, the "linen breeches" of the Jewish priest were peculiarly Jewish, and are not found amongst the Egyptians, or, indeed, amongst other nations of the East. And, finally, whilst the priests of Israel were barefooted, the Egyptian priesthood wore shoes or sandals of papyrus, as they objected to leather, as coming from the skin of holy animals.

If the constitution was copied from the Mythology of Egypt, it might be expected that this would particularly appear in the sacrificial rites. Now, the chief sacrifice of the Egyptians was that of a bull, near the tomb of Osiris, and at the shrine of Isis, at Busiris. The skin was taken from the victim, the bowels were removed, whilst the fat and other parts were left inside. The legs and head also were separated, and the trunk of the animal was filled with pure bread, honey, raisins, figs, spices and incense. And thus it was burned, whilst oil was profusely poured into the fire. The people fasted beforehand, whilst, during the ceremony, some wounded their foreheads with knives, and others amused themselves by beating each other. The remainder of the bull was eaten. The whole ceremony related to Osiris, his character, his history, his mythological connexion with physical ideas and powers. Another annual sacrifice was made at Thebes in honour of Amun-Kneph; the victim was a ram.

When the animal was skinned, it was buried in a coffin, with much ceremony, whilst the skin was placed upon the shoulders of the image of Kneph. The whole connexion of this sacrifice was of an astronomical character. On a third occasion was sacrificed a pig; and this was done when the Taurus of the zodiac was brought into a certain conjunction with the sun and the moon. The only analogy which we can find in the whole of the sacrificial rites, is that in the Mosaical constitution the sacrifice of a "red heifer" is commanded, (Numb. xix.) and that red bulls were sacrificed in Egypt. We are told that if the bull had a single white or black hair, which were the colours of Apis, the Egyptians considered it unfit for sacrifice. Red was the colour of Typhon, and *red-haired men* were styled Typhonites, and sacrificed to that obnoxious deity. Where, however, do we find similar ideas connected with the "*red heifer*" as one of the sacrificial animals of the Mosaic constitution?

Finally, respecting the *festivals* of the ancient Egyptians and of the chosen people, we may expect that they, also, were as different in nature and tendency as the Religions of both nations. The holy days of the former were closely connected with the seasons of the year, with the motions of the heavenly bodies, and the nature of their country. They had nothing but public amusements; vile processions of a most infamous character; observations of the stars through the horns of a

holy gazelle; coverings of the well-gilt figure of a bull with black Byssus cloth for three days; processions of the above-mentioned sacred boat to the sea; the leading of sacred cows round and round the temple of Osiris; merry expeditions of men and women in boats to places of pilgrimage; the clapping of hands on the part of the women, and the playing of flutes on the part of the men; songs and dances of a lascivious character; the drinking of abundance of wine, and the administering of blows between parties of priests as a religious ceremony! Who will recognise in these and other *indescribable* scenes, the holy sabbaths of the Lord? What have the Jewish festivals to do with solstices and equinoxes? The new moon, indeed, was observed, because it was given by Jehovah to measure the time, and to regulate the holy seasons, which pointed into the future, and of which it is written: "I gave them to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them." And these sabbaths were so exclusively Jewish, that it was synonymous in the mouth of Pagan authors *to keep the sabbath*, and *to be a Jew*. Historical festivals the Egyptians, of course, could never have; inasmuch as their whole history is purely fabulous; and festivals of atonement and sanctification were equally strange to their system of belief.

We regret to have been obliged to enter thus fully into the subject. But it seemed to be the

only method to silence those arrogant declamations, according to which the Mosaic constitution is of a purely Egyptian origin! It may, perhaps, tend, with the divine blessing, to remove an unfavourable impression from some anxious mind, which may have been troubled by the spread of these pernicious notions, without being able to meet them, from want of information respecting these matters.

2. As it must be of peculiar interest to become acquainted with the natural Religion of the neighbours of the Israelites, we shall now glance at the Phœnician Mythology. A thorough acquaintance with this spurious system of belief would throw light upon many a difficult passage of Holy Scripture. But this cannot be our present object. The repeated relapses of the Hebrews into idolatry form dark spots in their history; but how brilliant their heavenly Religion stands in the midst of the abominations of the nations that dwelt round about them, will appear from the desultory and brief notices which we shall now give upon the subject.

According to the profound researches which have recently been made, the term *Phœnicians* is applicable to all the nations which occupied the western coast of Palestine. The ancient inhabitants of this land were called *Canaanites*, i. e. *Kenaani*, or, the inhabitants of the Lowlands, in contradistinction to the *Arami*, or, the Highlanders. Phœnician signifies a *dyer*. The most powerful tribes of this nation occupied the

regions of Tyre and Sidon, and the writer was deeply impressed with the beauty and with the grandeur of the remains of their ancient capitals. The *Philistines* were of the same tribe, and their name signifies originally nothing but *wanderers*, or *Beduins*. They were also called *Plethi*, or the emigrants; and *Krethi*, or the exiled ones. In order to throw light upon these latter names, it will be requisite to remember their emigration into Egypt, under the name of "*Phoinikes allophyloi*," which took place, according to Manetho, about two thousand three hundred years before Christ. They are also called *Shepherds*, or wanderers; and they founded a Phœnician kingdom in Egypt, the capital of which was Memphis. This is the notorious dynasty of the *Hyksos*, which signifies in the ancient Egyptian language "*the Shepherd Kings*." The Hyksos, with their subjects, were called by the Egyptians the *emigrants*, *the Philisti*, and *the Plethi*. According to Herodotus, the Egyptians ascribed the building of the Pyramids to a hated shepherd tribe, called *Philitis*. And, in an inscription at Medinat-Aboo, mention is made of the "conquered Philistines." The emigration of the Phœnician-Philistines into Egypt was, however, not followed by a total subjection of Egypt; the dynasty of the Egyptian rulers was driven into Upper Egypt, whilst the Hyksos were for five hundred years in possession of Lower Egypt, after which period they were expelled.

That there should, consequently, be an analogy

between the Egyptian and the Phœnician Religions, cannot surprise; and the account of the creation of the universe, as far as we can gather it from the writings of Sanchoniathon, Philo, and Augustin, clearly shows the interchange of religious ideas. The Supreme Deity amongst all the Syro-Phœnician nations was the Chaldean *Baal*; and the Hebrews, upon taking possession of Canaan, found his sanctuaries already upon the high mountains, (Numb. xxii. Deut. xxii.); and they became a snare to Israel in the days of the Judges. The Chaldean form of the Phœnician Baal, was *Bel*, (Isa. xlvi.; Jer. l,) whilst the Grecian and Latin writers called him *Belus*.

Baal, or Bel, or Belus, simply signifies Lord and Master; and the Grecians and Romans generally identify him with Jupiter. But the Baal in question was the solar deity under various modifications. Since in the days of Samuel, "the children of Israel did put away Baalim, and Ashtaroth, and served the Lord only," (1 Sam. vii. 4,) it did not reappear until the days of Ahab's reign, who introduced it again for Jezebel's sake, from Tyre, (1 Kings xvi. 30—33;) and this wicked queen, who was the daughter of the king of Phœnicia, fed some eight hundred and fifty priests and prophets of Baal and Baaltis at her table. (1 Kings xviii. 19.) The idolatry of Solomon, Jeroboam, and other kings of Judah and Israel, was not that of Baal.

Although Baal was the solar deity, he was like-

wise represented in the characters of Saturn and Mars. As Saturn, he is called Baal-Chewan, and Baal-Ithan. In the character of Mars, he appears under the term of Baal-Chammon, and Baal-Moloch. But even in this threefold character, Baal appears again in his solar character. As Adonis, Baal was the sun in the spring; Baal-Chammon was the sun in his burning character during the summer. Baal-Chewan gathers strength during the winter for new productions. Baal-Adonis is associated with his spouse Baaltis, or Mylitta. Baal-Chammon is sometimes the rival of Adonis, but generally he appears as the husband of Melechet, or Astarte. Baal-Chewan is associated with the Syrian Rhea, and at other times is brought likewise in connexion with Baaltis and Astarte.

None of the Phœnician deities was more common than Baal-Adonis. He was worshipped at Byblus with Baaltis, as the Supreme Deity; and their rites were of a most abominable character. The death of the solar deity Adonis, which reminds us of the Egyptian Osiris, and over which the Hebrew women likewise lamented, (Ezek. viii. 14,) was celebrated in the month of September. (Ezek. viii. 1.) *Tammuz* signifies in the Egyptian tongue, "*the buried one.*" To his ceremonies allusion is made in Zech. xii. 2, for *Hadad-rimmon* signifies, "*the exalted solar deity.*" According to Hieronymus, these lamentations were even to be heard in Bethlehem. He writes: "Beth-

lehem nunc nostrum et augustissimum orbis locum, de quo Psalmista canit: Veritas de terrâ orta est, *locum inumbrabat Thammus, id est Adonis:*" and he adds, that it was painful to hear the lamentations for Adonis where the child Jesus had wept!

Baal-Chewan, or "the Lord of Eternity," was adored at Gaza, as Baal-Cheled, or the "Lord of time." He is the Grecian Kronos, and the Roman Saturnus. He is mentioned as Chiun in Amos v. 26, and is called Remphan in Acts vii. 43; which was, according to an Arabico-Coptic list of the planets, one of the names of Saturnus. Kevan is the Persian name for the same planet; and from it we have the name of Chiun in the prophet Amos. Baal-Adonis, and his spouse Mylitta, were never worshipped with human sacrifices; but Baal-Chewan assumed the character of Moloch, and was honoured with annual sacrifices of children, both in Phœnicia and its colonies. Before an expedition of war, or the founding of some new colony, or the building of a new town, as was the case when the foundation of Antioch was laid, a *pure virgin* was sacrificed to the god! On occasions of public calamity, such as famine, war, and plague, recourse was had to similar means to subdue the wrath of the deity. When Alexander was before Tyrus, the lot was to decide, whose *only child* was to be sacrificed! And it is singular that this stern deity could not be approached by any woman. Only young animals, innocent children,

and pure virgins, were acceptable sacrifices on his altar.

Baal-Chammon, or Moloch, was different both from Adonis and from Baal-Chewan. He is the Typhon of Egypt; and his name signifies "the Lord of the burning heat." He is the fire deity, but with reference to the sun and the solar heat. He is Adramelech, or the "king of the fire," (2 Kings xvii. 3;) to him the Sepharvites burned their children. He is Mars, the god of war, and Typhon, the divinity of the sea, according to the testimony of Philo. Amongst the Ammonites he was called Malchan, "our king," and by the Hebrews, Malcham, "their king."

The Moloch of the ancient Canaanites reappears in the valley Hinnom, together with the Tophets, or the sacred fireplaces, since the Hebrews came into contact with the Assyrians. (2 Kings xxiii. 10; Jer. vii. 31, 32; xix. 6, 13, 14.) It appears now again for the first time since the days of Moses, being revived by King Ahaz. The idolatry of the heavenly host too becomes now more generally a snare to the Israelites. The sun is honoured with horses and chariots, as among the Persians; and the idolatrous apparatus, which was destroyed by King Josiah, contained the idols of Baal, Ashtoreth, Chemoch, and Milcom. (2 Kings xxiii. 11.) The Moloch, who was fire and solar deity at the same time, devoured many a child, which was dedicated to Jehovah. (2 Kings xxiii.; Jer. xxxii.; Deut. xii. xviii.; 2 Kings vi. xvii.;

Jer. vii.; Lev. xviii.) He was the sacrificial fire himself, which consumed the children. (Ezek. xv. xvi. xxii. xxiii.; Jer. xxxii.)

A member of that Neologian school which has bred so many "*foxes in the Lord's vineyard*" on the Continent, has lately brought himself to that pitch of erudition and accomplishment in literature, which makes him feel quite competent to enlighten the present generation with the novelty of his discovery, according to which *the Hebrews kept holy the Sabbath-day in honour of Moloch!* "*They became vain in their imagination, and their foolish heart was darkened; professing themselves to be wise, they became fools. Clouds they are without water; trees twice dead, without fruit. Their mouth speaketh great swelling words!*"

The much agitated question, whether the term "*to make pass through the fire*" signified simply a lustration in that pure element, or an actual sacrifice, is clearly decided by those passages where an actual slaughter and burning of the victims is mentioned. (Ezek. xxiii. 37; xvi. 20, 21; Ps. cvi. 37, 38; Jer. vii. 31; xix. 5.) The passing through the fire was considered a fiery baptism of the victim, who was cleansed from the dross of the body, and thus prepared for a unity with the pure deity. It is only since the revival of the rites of Baal-Moloch, that we read of an idolatrous priesthood in Israel; for, although they had often fallen into idolatry, they never before that time had a Pagan priesthood. In Tyrus, the chief-priest

was not seldom raised to the throne, as was the case with the father of Jezebel.

The character of these three distinct deities or Baals was, however, confounded in the lapse of time; and, according to Menander, it was King Hiram who broke down the ancient sanctuaries, built a temple to the solar deity Baalzamim, and celebrated again, for the first time, the death of Adonis, who was killed by Typhon, on his expedition to Lybia. It would appear, from the language of Elias, that the legend of this deity was known to the Hebrews. "Cry aloud, for he is a god; perhaps he is meditating, or pursuing, (like Hercules Philosophus Tyrius;) perhaps he is on a journey (to Lybia); or, peradventure he sleepeth, (being killed by Typhon,) and must be awakened, (as by Jolaus.)" (1 Kings xviii.) But even here we have a conjunction of all that is vile and cruel in Pagan idolatry. The same Baal-Moloch, who, amidst his cruel rites, was served by pure virgins and monastic priests, into whose temples no impure animal was to enter, upon whose altars burned a perpetual flame,—the same deity was subsequently honoured by the grossest impurities. The men are habited in the garments of women, and the women are dressed in the garments of men; a custom which is already prohibited, in Deut. xxii. 5. The attendants upon the goddess are dwelling in "*houses of Sodomites;*" (2 Kings xxiii. 7;) whilst the valley of Gehinnom smokes with the blood of innocent children, which

are sacrificed to Moloch. (Jer. xxxii. 35.) In Samaria we have the same abominable rites; and in the Libanon, they were practised as far down as the days of Constantine.

The chief goddesses of the Phœnicians are deifications of the powers of Nature and of the heavenly bodies. To the former belong the goddesses Baaltis, Mylitta, and Ashera. The latter has been confounded with the goddess Astarte, whilst the Scriptures make a broad distinction between them. (2 Kings xxiii. 6, 14, 15.) They are, indeed, both associated with Baal; but they are different goddesses. The name of *Ashera*, which occurs thirty-nine times in Holy Scripture, has, in the authorized version, been always translated by the word "*grove*." The application of the term uniformly shows that it is more an image of the goddess, than the goddess herself, which is meant by *Ashera*. We hear of four hundred prophets of Ashera; of tents of Ashera, which were made by the women in "the houses of the Sodomites;" of a "horror of Ashera, which was made by Maachah;" of "vessels made for Baal and Ashera;" which distinctly shows the connexion of Ashera with Baaltis.

We have this Ashera in Samaria and in Jerusalem. She is placed in the temple by Manasseh, until burned by his successor after half a century. Baal's *images of stone* are generally placed together with the *wooden figures* of Ashera. Being of wood, the Ashera is always "*cut down*" and "*burned with fire*." Whilst

the altars are *destroyed*, the *statues broken* down, the *Ashera* is invariably *cut down*. Hezekiah "*broke down the images*, or statues; he *cut down* the *Ashera*, and *brake in pieces* the brazen serpent." The idol Ashera seems, therefore, to have been some rude image of Baaltis, placed on or near the altar of Baal, or under some "green trees" upon some elevated spot.

The word Ashera has, however, been rendered *grove* or *tree* in many ancient and modern translations. Now, although this translation is inapplicable to most of the passages, it is yet one which is countenanced by some few expressions. Jehovah threatens to "*pluck up*" their Asheras. (Micah v. 14.) And (Deut. xvi. 21) it is said: "Thou shalt not *plant* thee an *Ashera* of many trees near unto the altar of the Lord thy God." We should, therefore, conclude that Ashera was a rude idol of wood, which in most cases was placed in groves and under green trees. Hence we read of Asheras "*by the green trees upon the high hills*," (Jer. xvii. 2;) of "*idols under every green tree*," —a sight which is most common in modern India.

Another goddess was Derceto, in the compound form of a woman and a fish; she is the Dagon of the Philistines. Her chief seat was Askelon; and she is the Syrian goddess Atergatis. The goddess Beruth, or Bareuth, from whom the name of the Syrian town, was only another name of Baaltis.

Baaltis and Mylitta already partook, in a measure, of a sidereal character among the Phœnicians; but

this is particularly true of *Ashtoreth*, the goddess of the Sidonians, whose rites were occasionally introduced into Jerusalem after the days of Solomon. (1 Kings xi. 5; 2 Kings xxiii. 13.) As we have a plurality of *Baalim*, so also of *Ashtŏreths*. She is the "queen of heaven," (Jer. vii. 18; xliv. 17, 18;) and is, at one time, taken in the character of Venus, at another, in the character of the moon. Aphrodite, which signifies a *dove*, is the same goddess, but assumed far more the character of *Melechet*, the firey spouse of *Moloch*, than that of the lascivious goddess of the Babylonian Baaltis.

¶ The sidereal divinities were always worshipped in the open air, or upon the roofs of houses. (See Zeph. i. 5; 2 Kings xxiii. 12; Jer. xix. 13.) Hence, Manasseh built altars for all the host of heaven in the two *open courts* of the house of the Lord. (2 Kings xxi. 5; xxiii. 12.) Hence Ahaz took away "*the covert for the sabbath*," on account of the king of Assyria, who was a worshipper of the heavenly host, which were always worshipped by bowing, and turning to the east. (2 Kings xvi. 18; Deut. iv. 19; Ezek. viii. 16, 17.) As the Assyrians, like the Persians, were adverse to idols and symbols in general, Ahaz was obliged, by Tiglath-pileser, to destroy the brazen sea, which rested upon twelve oxen, and other ornaments of the temple. (2 Kings xvi. 17.) He also changed the position of the altar, (2 Kings xvi. 14;) as the great altar, which was twenty yards broad, and

ten yards high, prevented the idolators from worshipping to the East!

In the natural Religion of the Phœnicians we have, therefore, all the cruelty and all the moral depravity which is peculiar to Paganism. We shall not further trouble our readers with their deifications of the elements, rivers, lakes, fountains, woods, and mountains. Nor should we feel inclined to enter into a detailed account of the disgusting rites of their deities. Yet, with all the contrast between these and the living God, there were some individuals sufficiently impious to look upon the name of Jehovah as being derived from one of the vile Phœnician deities, to whom we ought finally to allude, and who was known by the mystical name of *Jao*.

The name *Jehovah* is of a purely Hebrew origin, and is explained to signify the *Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.* (Rev. i. 8; iv. 8.) That there was something mysterious in its character, as being the covenant appellation of the God of Israel, has been already observed on a former occasion. But that the Jews had a superstitious veneration for the name, and that they abstained from pronouncing it, was not according to the spirit of the Bible. We are rather inclined to think that they imitated the Pagans in this respect. We know that the Pagans had mystical names of their deities, which were not to be pronounced. *Hermes*, for instance, had such a name; and it would have been a capital

crime if any one, not initiated into the mysteries, had happened to hear the same. Jamblichus speaks of such mystical names, which were in use amongst the Chaldeans and the Egyptians. The sacred word *Om*, or *Aum*, may not be uttered amongst the Hindoos, except by a Brahmin.

The Chaldean and Phœnician *Jao* was the Supreme Deity, but he was the solar deity with a fourfold signification; and we would remind our readers that, according to Eustathius, Baal was represented with four faces. According to Suidas, the idolatrous king Manasseh had placed a similar image of Baal in the temple at Jerusalem! *Jao* is the god of the *four seasons of the year*, and more especially that of the Autumn. That *Jao* is therefore *Adonis* is beyond all doubt. In the first place, the surname, "*Jao the Tender*," is applicable to him. Secondly, Adonis was particularly the god of the Autumn. Thirdly, Adonis was adored as the *Supreme* Deity in Mount Lebanon and at Byblus. Fourthly, Adonis had a mysterious name. And lastly, we have evidence that Adonis was called Jao at Cyrus. Jao signifies, "*He makes alive;*" and that this was meant only in a physical sense is clear, from the supposed death of the solar deity Adonis, from his resurrection in the Spring, and from his reviving the whole of nature. We shall abstain from tracing the natural process by which it came to pass that the names of *Jao* and *Jehovah*, or *Jah*, were sometimes confounded by profane writers, as we wish

to adhere to certain principles which we have laid down for our guidance. One thing, however, is certain, that the word *Jehovah* is as little derived from *Jao* as the ark of the covenant was derived from the holy ship of the Egyptians. What communion, then, may we ask, has the *Holy, holy, holy Lord God of Hosts, who was, and is, and is to come,* with the *lascivious* and *abominable character of Baal-Adonis?*

The Phœnicians, with all their wisdom and power, by which they made themselves conspicuous in the history of the world at a time when our forefathers had perhaps not yet emigrated into Western Europe from the distant East,—these Phœnicians *knew not God!* Instead of cultivating the natural Religion in which they were to *glorify God and be thankful,* their foolish heart was darkened. They served the creature more than the Creator!

3. It will not be expected that we should give a minute description of *Grecian Mythology;* nor does it fall within the scope of this work to give a detailed account of the natural Religion of the highly polished nation of ancient Greece. It will suffice to glance at the general character of this creed, with a view to determine what man could accomplish in speculating upon religious subjects, without being aided by special revelation. We shall the less hesitate to confine our remarks to a few leading features of this Mythology, as people generally know more of the Grecian and Roman systems of belief, than of any other spurious

kind of Religion. They are, in some way or other, brought before our notice from our childhood.

The classical authors speak of a golden age of happiness and bliss, during which no evil was yet in existence. But the next generation began to be filled with pride, arrogance, and neglect of the altars of the deities. But it was the third age of the world, or the age of brass, which was peopled with a generation of men so utterly wicked, as to bring upon them a general *flood*, in which the righteous Deucalion, with his excellent wife Pyrrha, and her children, according to Apollodorus, were saved by an ark. Plutarch speaks of *doves*, which were sent to ascertain the decline of the waters; and Lucian mentions "all manner of animals" which went into the ark with Deucalion!

From what we can learn of the character of the primitive Religion of the Grecians, it would appear that they worshipped divine beings which, as yet, had no distinct names. They adored the powers of nature, the heavenly bodies, the elements of the earth, and the spirits of their ancestors. We hear of their deifying trees, rocks, and stones. Religious rites, too, were found to exist among them at an early period, in honour of some unknown Deity. And even Kronos, *i. e.* Time, who ruled during the age of primitive happiness and bliss, cannot be looked upon as a personal deity. The Romans, as well as the Grecians, honoured this deity originally only through Saturnalian festivities, during which the agricultural slaves

were permitted to have their full measure of mirth and gladness. The Olympian deities, as yet, were unknown amongst the Grecians. The deities which are said to have been propagated by Kronos, are such as to indicate the physical character of the ante-Homerian creed.

The *genuine* Grecian Mythology was founded at a subsequent period, upon ideas which were introduced from the East, and by way of Egypt. But these foreign elements were cast into the Grecian mould, and hence the purely Hellenistic character of Grecian Mythology. Whilst the Oriental nations, and even the Egyptians, were inclined to represent their deities by rude symbols, which were drawn from the heavenly bodies and the elements of the earth; from animate and inanimate nature; and even, not unfrequently, from a mixture of human and animal forms: the Grecian, on the contrary, anthropomorphises the deity. To speak perhaps more correctly, it theomorphises humanity, in raising human nature to the level of the deity. Or, to use the Apostle's plain speech, it changes *the glory of the incorruptible God into the image of corruptible man!* This distinction between the Oriental and the Grecian Mythology grew more and more apparent as the latter gradually threw off the elemental and symbolical character which it had, in the ante-Homerian ages, in common with the Eastern systems of belief. The Grecian Religion was, therefore, the perfection of Paganism, inasmuch as it

endeavoured at last to represent the Deity by the noblest of all forms. With the deification of man, and the representation of the attributes of the Deity in human forms, the Grecian Mythology finished the circuit of Pagan speculations. But we shall presently see that they were far from accomplishing their great design. As the natural man had lost the Divine image, the Grecian Mythology could only deify the image of the *natural* man in his fallen condition, with all his defects, imperfections, and vices, which could not be hidden by all the ingenuity of the Grecian mind, although it shed a certain lustre and glory around their earthly frames. What the Grecian Mythology attempted to do, could only be accomplished by the Christian Religion, in which the believer is made "*partaker of the Divine nature!*"

The Grecians commenced by personifying the different elements of nature, like all other systems of Oriental Paganism, but they did more by degrees. Whilst ancient philosophy fell prostrate before the sidereal, physical and elemental deities of the East; whilst the Egyptians, Babylonians, and Phœnicians concentrated their Mythological system in the heavenly bodies and their supposed influence upon the earth and its inhabitants,—the Grecian Mythology assumed neither the one nor the other of these forms of the natural Religion of the Pagan world. The peculiar tendency of the branch of Paganism which we have exemplified in the Grecian Religion, was indeed already

contained in other systems of belief, but it was left to the former to carry it into effect.

In all the systems of natural Religion which have until now come under our observation, man is directly subjected to the rule of physical powers, the sovereignty of the heavenly bodies, and the elements of the earth. In all and every system man falls a sacrifice to the wrath of these physical deities; and in Egypt he has in the four-footed beasts, not only his equals but his superiors. Man could never, therefore, raise himself to the dignity and liberty which was absolutely necessary to the development of true Religion. The ancient Grecians were inspired by an indefinite feeling of the great destiny of man and humanity in general. It appeared, therefore, to them, that humanity was capable of being raised to a comparatively far higher elevation. Hence their deification of nature led them to deify humanity.

This change in Pagan Mythology was no doubt suggested and greatly facilitated by the power and strength of the Grecian mind, and its singular taste for what is beautiful and great. As the national fondness for what is fine and beautiful prevailed among the Grecians, what was more natural than to sift and to sever those repugnant elements of rude physical or animal forms in religious matters, which they had inherited from their uncivilized and barbarian ancestors? The charm of their poetical mind changed the gods into nobler beings; and Grecian civilization gave to

Grecian divinities a more comely and agreeable appearance. The gods are indeed born and educated upon earth, they appear in all things like men, are still subject to human infirmities and passions; but they are more mighty and more wise than falls to the common lot of mankind.

The Grecians were naturally endowed with faculties to emancipate the idea of the godhead from the more degrading forms and powers of nature, and to introduce the same into the circle of human life and human circumstances. Divine attributes were represented in human form, and the individual who was invested with the same became a deity. As every being has its own history, it was natural that the Grecians should fashion a spurious history of these god-men; and hence their Mythology! Thus the whole Olympian circle of deities was the creation of the natural intellect of the Grecians, and their personifications were based upon Mythos. The nation was endowed with the talent of an inexhaustible imagination, connected with a distinguished taste for beauty in every form and figure. And to these talents the Grecian Mythology owes much more than to their intellect. The beauty of form and the charms of poetry have much contributed to the fact, that the great defects and errors of the Grecian Mythology have been treated so frequently with too much indulgence. If we put aside this merit, the Grecian Mythology is nothing but an incongruous and heterogeneous mass of ridiculous fables. This was

very early discovered by the intelligent part of the Grecian population. And indeed Herodotus declares, that Hesiod and Homer, and, we may add, some of their unknown predecessors, created the Olympian deities.

In order to prove what we have now said of the peculiarity of the Grecian Mythology, we confine our remarks to the chief deities of the Grecians. Jupiter and Juno, or Zeus and Hera, were originally physical and elemental deities, which ruled and controlled the upper regions; they are by degrees metamorphosed into human characters, in which they appear as the king and the queen of Grecian divinities. Jupiter is born on the island of Crete, and he grows up under the care of Adrasteia and Ida, being nourished by the goat Amalthea with milk and honey, and entertained by the armorial dances of the Kuretes. He appears always as supreme lord of the gods, but is never represented as the creator of the universe. The fire and water deities are placed at his disposal. Yet, as his character is professedly of human origin, and as the person who is invested with these powers is after all a mortal being, the king and father of gods falls into all the excesses to which mortals are exposed in the possession of extraordinary power. He is not only overruled at times and seasons by an irrevocable fate, but labours under the most disgraceful infirmities of the fallen nature of man. His royal spouse, the queen of the Olympian throne, was originally one of the physical goddesses. She was born, according to some,

upon Samos, which is also mentioned as the place in which she was wedded to her royal partner. But in this point the accounts do not agree, as many other places would claim the honour of being connected with her history. She was the patron of nuptials, and many of her festivals bear distinctly this character. She is represented as a revengeful and jealous goddess; and Jupiter himself seems to have given abundant cause for that jealousy and want of confidence of which she was the victim.

In Apollo, the sun was originally personified and worshipped. But the poets have changed him into a handsome representation of youth; and with the bodily comeliness was connected the beauty and accomplishment of the mind. He is the god of music and song, and the patron of fine arts in general. But as his accomplishments have no other foundation than that of a refined and noble species of sensuality, they are by no means able to protect him against the power of temptation. Mercury, in the Grecian Mythology, exemplifies the spirit of prudence, and is described as the inventor of the art of persuasion. But as these accomplishments are merely measured by a human standard, it was natural that they should likewise degenerate into human infirmities. Discretion becomes cunning and craftiness; the art of persuasion, lies and deceit; prudence in the common affairs of life degenerates into dishonesty; and thus the patron of prudence and justice becomes the tutelar

god of thieves. Mars is the deification of courage and strength; but as it is not that moral courage which grows from moral strength, and which is guided by sound reason and animated by the highest motives, we have nothing but a rude manifestation of an angry and revengeful disposition of the human mind, which delights in destruction.

Besides Juno, we have three other chief goddesses. Venus, or Aphrodites, was the goddess of love, the goddess of beauty; but amongst all the descriptions which Pausanias gives of her character, there is indeed not the slightest allusion to higher and nobler qualifications. She is endowed with all the personal charms of her sex; whilst in her fabulous character are concentrated all the qualities which anything but the most profane licentiousness would have protested against. Diana, or Artemis, is of a more respectable character than Venus; but as an anomalous feature in her feminine character appears her being passionately addicted to hunting! Minerva, lastly, exhibited *manly* wisdom and intrepidity, which is likewise an anomalous feature in the tender sex.

Whenever a scene of human exploits was brought to a conclusion, the Grecian poets removed, as it were, the veil from the summit of Olympus, upon which the deities were considered to be enthroned. The large-eyed and jealous Juno is placed by the side of the god of thunder. Whilst courage and wisdom are shown to dwell upon Minerva's brow, Venus, the

spray-born goddess of love, displays all the charms of beauty, and exhibits all the powers of love intrigues, which are peculiarly her own. Diana, armed with her bow, and accompanied by a host of nymphs, rushes through forests and over mountains; whilst the former are filled with the echo of her arms, the latter are represented as trembling under her feet. Whilst Mars returns agitated from the excitement of the field of battle, Apollo, as the god of song and inspiration, unlooses the silver bow, and grasps the melodious strings of the well-tuned lyre. Whilst Vulcan gives heed to his cyclopeans and forge, Isis is always ready to glide down swiftly upon the splendid rainbow, to fulfil the commands of Juno the great. Mercury, with his staff, guides the dying into Hades; whilst Ceres draws from the bosom of mother earth the blessings of the harvest, which rejoice man and beast. And, moreover, every darkened wood, every rising mountain, every bubbling fountain, enjoys the presence of heavenly nymphs and guardian spirits; the dark-haired Neptune dashes through the fierce waves of the mighty ocean; and Pluto, with Proserpine, rules over the shadows of departed spirits in the lower regions; and at the entrance of their dark abode howls the three-headed Cerberus. Charon is pulling his boat hither and thither on the waters of the Styx; whilst on the farther shore many are seen tormented by vain hopes, because their bodies have not been duly buried in this world.

But the living also are under the special care of certain tutelar deities. Whilst Helios descends and ascends the heavens in behalf of the good and of the evil; Jupiter cares for the stranger; Juno minds the ladies of the house; Diana guards the sportsman; Ceres blesses the agriculturist; Apollo inspires bards and seers; Mars is the protector of the man of war; and Vulcan is the master of men working in iron and brass.

A connecting link between the Olympian gods and mortal men was found in that famous race of heroes and demi-gods which were the illegitimate offspring of an Olympian with a merely human parent. Sons and daughters, as the descendants of the deities, is an idea extremely absurd, but it has nothing extraordinary when we remember, that the Olympian gods have throughout shown their human nature. The gods are always framed on a purely human model. The godhead of the Grecian Mythology combines certain human excellencies, which were seen scattered here and there in several persons.

As the Grecian deities were only eminent and extraordinary men, they naturally could not satisfy the craving of the human mind after something more solid than what it could produce from its own resources. This tendency was indeed calculated to encourage the development of the natural powers of the natural man. But whilst these deities called forth the faculties of the Grecian nation, the moral and

spiritual wants of man were left unheeded. This unsatisfactory character of the Olympian gods rendered it natural that the more ancient deities maintained a place in the back-ground of the Grecian Mythology, although they receded farther and farther on the horizon. The elemental, astronomical, and physical deities, which preceded the Olympian gods, were indeed, as poor as these; but there was still afloat in the Grecian mind an idea of the "*unknown God,*" and to him was consecrated an altar as far down as the days of the Apostles. As no one of the Olympian gods was ever mentioned as the creator of the universe, and as all were equally finite, infirm, imperfect, and subject to human passions, there was always above them an "*unknown God.*" Every one of the Grecian deities was "*such a one*" as themselves; and the reason they looked up to them with a certain degree of reverence was, because they were their superiors in wisdom and strength, and because they expected from them certain good things which they needed.

Beauty of form being a peculiar characteristic of the deities of the Grecian Mythology, it was natural that the influence of these deities upon the feeling and imagination of the Greeks should be very considerable. There was a strong *religious* motive to personify the comparatively perfect features of the imaginary deities, which have been created by the imaginative powers of the poet, in the history of the nation, and to fix them in the finest possible forms of

statues of stone and of brass. Art and poetry, however, could not give permanent satisfaction to the human mind; and Grecian civilization could not satisfy the religious wants of the nation, much less could it benefit the world at large. There was, indeed, some good resulting from these efforts, as some of the Grecian statues still serve as models to the sculptor of the present generation. Inasmuch as the Grecian master of arts furnished not only a common ornament, but strove to represent the highest ideal which the Grecian mind was capable of conceiving of the Deity, it was natural that the highest faculties of man should be enlisted in the service of sculptures and statuary among the Greeks.

Like all other nations, the Grecians had a singular fear of their imaginary deities. And, according to the original, St. Paul declared, upon Mars' Hill, at Athens, that he perceived they *were altogether absorbed in the fear of the gods.* (Acts xvii. 23.) They consequently established a multitude of religious rites to appease their wrath. Yet this natural fear of something above the natural man was greatly modified by that singular light-mindedness and the all-absorbing and fantastical cheerfulness of temper which is peculiar to the Grecian character; and thus it followed that the religious rites in honour of the deities assumed the character of public amusements, rather than of devotional exercises. This is the general character of their religious festivals; they were made occasions of national amusement,

which consisted in magnificent processions, dancing, singing, and playing! If, by similar accompaniments, the devotion of the people was rather prevented than encouraged and supported, what shall be said of certain kinds of religious rites, which were directly opposed to the general principles of morality? As almost in every other system of natural Religion, so also amongst the Grecians, has an abandoned sensuality succeeded in deifying the vilest species of vice. We refer only to the abominable rites of the goddess Aphrodites, at Paphos, and in Cyprus; and to the lewd festivals of Adonis and Bacchus! And how the rites of the famous Mysteries, which exercised a salutary influence in former days, have at last degenerated, can be easily learned from the writings of Livy. The peculiar defects of the Grecian Religion are, therefore, the natural consequence of its peculiar tendency. The godhead, which was to others involved in a profound mystery, was amongst the Greeks dissected by a cold intellect into a number of vague notions, which were considered to be realized in human beings and their peculiar characters. Each one of these deities was, therefore, a distinct person; and in order to make them appear still more isolated, each was surrounded by his own fabulous history, which had reference to different places, persons, and tribes. And thus it happened that all internal connexion between the deities, as the bearers of divine attributes, was destroyed. A want of unity

was, therefore, an essential defect in the Grecian Religion, which was by no means remedied by the subordination of some gods to others. The Mythology, with all its pompous character, embodied no rational ideas regarding the godhead and divine things; whilst a sentimental admiration of the beauties by which it was surrounded served, perhaps, to blind the judgment of the spectator for a season; but this false lustre could not endure the sober reflections of even common philosophy. It was, no doubt, through the poverty of this system, as regards morality and religious truth, that their ideas of the future state were so poor and comfortless. They believed, indeed, that there was an immortality of the soul after death, but without making it in any wise bear upon this present life, and without expectations of something future. It was a dreamy existence of the soul in a world of shadows!

These and similar defects could not escape the scrutiny of the philosophical spirit amongst that remarkable nation. Hence, philosophy is soon found to be opposed to Mythology. There was, indeed, an effort made by one of the later philosophical schools to discover beneath the charming poetry of spirited bards some philosophical ideas; but whatever they may have imagined to exist below these gaudy forms, it was always but a dream; and not even the peculiarity of Grecian civilization was found to be of a purely religious origin. It was a

fair show, which vanished as a floating mist before the rising sun.

As soon as the source of the Grecian Mythology failed, the mighty efforts of art and science to sculpture the forms of the deities were brought to an untimely conclusion. When Greece was brought into contact with other nations, the Grecian peculiarity suddenly disappeared. When Greece was conquered, the national creed, the political and civil virtues of the nation, dwindled away with the national independence. This was the judgment of God upon *Grecian wisdom!* The Greeks thought much of their being free citizens; and their greatest philosopher, Plato, connected the highest bliss with the State. They minded earthly things; and Religion and the adoration of the gods all being made to serve the interests of the State, the glory of the latter departed, and with it their Religion and civilization! Religion being only a luxuriating in fine arts and in the charms of poetry, it was destitute of the least spark of a spiritual element. There was, therefore, nothing left by which the Grecian mind could rally and recover itself from the shock which it received on the breaking-up of the national constitution. The Grecian Mythology was entirely of a *Grecian* character, and had so completely grown together with the social and political existence of the country, that, with the loss of this their national independence, they had likewise to deplore the fall of their Mythology. In the eyes of antiquity,

political subjection was at all times considered a sure sign that a nation had been forsaken by its national deities. Such was the natural Religion of ancient Greece!

4. We shall now turn from the nation which has excelled all other nations in poetry and fine arts, to another of a more recent date, which has given laws to the world. The Mythology of the *ancient Romans* has been too often considered as a mere compound from other systems of belief. But it had far more of its own than is generally admitted. It is true, the *Roman* Mythology received, at a later period, Grecian and other elements into its system; but it is equally true, that, from the beginning, the Romans had their own creed. And we observe, also, with regard to them, that they proceeded from an ideal to a symbolical, and from a symbolical to a mythological system of belief.

Plutarch, in speaking of the laws of Numa, distinctly declares, that the lawgiver sanctioned *no image* of the Godhead, either in the form of men or animals; that they built temples and chapels, but fashioned no images of the Deity, considering it wrong to represent the better one by something far inferior. The sacrifices, too, were, according to this author, of a simple and peaceable character, there being no bloody oblations offered by the people.

Even after the symbols of the Godhead were introduced into the worship of the ancient Italians, it is

evident that their creed had no affinity to that genuine Grecian Mythology which so soon superseded the more ancient and simple form of Religion in that nation. The superiority of the Roman to the Grecian system of belief has been acknowledged even by Dionysius of Halicarnassus, when he declared that the Romans knew nothing of the ridiculous stories of the Grecians; that they neither speak of Uranos having been mutilated by his offspring, nor of Kronos having swallowed his own children, nor of Jupiter having dethroned his father, and banished him into Tartarus. He also gives credit to the Romans for not speaking, as the Grecians did, of wars, and wounds, and fetters, and toils of the deities; or lamenting over lost divinities. Dionysius likewise declares, that the Romans, although already corrupt in manners, were yet, in their religious ceremonies, more sober and reasonable than the Grecians, in not having amongst them the lascivious processions and rites which existed among the latter. The national creed, in its simple form, was guarded, amongst the Romans, by the pious zeal of the priesthood, against the license of the poet and the liberties of the artist, which had exercised so unfavourable an influence upon the moral tendency of the Grecian Mythology.

The most ancient deity of the Romans was *Jupiter Optimus Maximus;* to him was added Quirinus, the founder of the capital of their empire, after he had disappeared during a thunderstorm, and was supposed

to have ascended in it to heaven! They also knew of sovereigns and great men, who had come in ancient days to Italy to propagate the first germs of knowledge and civilization, such as Janus, Saturnus, Faunus, Evander, and Hercules, who came from the East. These benefactors of the country and nation were retained in the memory of the people with great veneration, and partly received religious worship. Jupiter, Mars, and Quirinus, however, remained the chief gods amongst the Romans; and Numa regulated their services, by appointing a regular priesthood to superintend their worship. He at the same time sanctioned the worship of the goddess Hestia or Vesta, whose sole image was the sacred flame of fire, which was fed upon her altars by her priestesses.

A second peculiarity in the Roman Mythology, is the deification of virtues and qualities which are calculated to make a nation great and excellent, and without which, especially, no civil state can be permanently founded. The Greeks were ignorant of these particular deities. Beauty of form was the guiding principle which inspired the Grecian mind in its work of fashioning its divinities; and being blinded by this passion for what is beautiful, it never hesitated to sacrifice every moral feeling. The Romans were more grave, more sober and serious, in these matters, than their volatile neighbours; and they preserved this character till the fifth century after the building of their capital. They knew and felt that a civil com-

monwealth could not exist without certain virtues, which should be the guardians of the laws of the land. Hence, they founded temples, and built altars in their city, to remind every citizen of his duty to the State. Courage and bravery is necessary before all things to preserve the independence of the great city in ancient days, amidst still greater and more ancient cities; *Virtus*, therefore, was the first of these guardian deities. As courage and bravery are greatly supported by a feeling of honour amongst a nation, the altar of *Honor* was placed next to that of *Virtus*. As, however, a nation is preserved not only by the fear which bravery diffuses around it, but also by the fidelity which it shows towards others in dealing with them, the Romans placed the image of *Fides* near that of Jupiter in the Capitolium. In the same manner, those virtues which had reference to more private life were likewise honoured with temples and religious rites; such as *Concordia* and *Pudicitia*. And as, in the most critical periods, the only remedy seems to lie in not despairing of success, but in hopefully expecting a better fortune, the Romans consecrated temples to the divine trio, *Spes*, *Salus*, and *Fortuna!*

In addition to this political theology of the ancient Romans, we discover another element, which seemed more of a religious character, and which was made the source of nearly all the ceremonial observances which we discover in the Grecian Mythology. The Romans, namely, believed that the gods were not only

concerned as to the affairs of the nation and of the State, but that they would likewise, beforehand, signify by signs in the heavens, by birds and animals, what were their decrees respecting them. If the fable of the vultures of Remus and Romulus be not the creature of a much later period, it is evident that the Romans had similar ideas from very ancient days. It is, however, certain that the art of prognosticating future events was chiefly introduced amongst them from Etruria. The Romans, consequently, gave their whole mind to the observation of these oracular signs. Numa had already established the institution of augury; and the later ordinance of the college of a pontifical priesthood, was to watch over the sacred rites which were connected with the inspection of the entrails of sacrificed animals. Another college of wise men, again, was charged with the exposition of the Sybilline books; and they were to signify by what means the wrath of the gods was to be appeased in seasons of public calamities. Religion, therefore, was thus not only the concern of private individuals, but it regulated the whole machinery of the State. And inasmuch as nothing could be undertaken in the national affairs of the empire,—as every motion in times of war, and during the enjoyment of public peace, was regulated by the established Religion,—the Romans seemed to have been the most *religious nation* of the earth. The whole fabric, indeed, was based upon pure superstition; and, in the more corrupt periods

of the republic, it was abused to serve the vilest species of political intrigues; but there was expressed in these pseudo-oracles a feeling "after God," a "groping" after his providential care which he exercises in behalf of his creatures!

The ancient Religion of the Romans in its more simple form was, however, not preserved in its rigid simplicity. As soon as they were brought into contact with other nations, they not only admitted foreign gods and foreign rites, but they even distinguished themselves above all other nations in modernising their Religion. With Grecian literature, Grecian superstition and Grecian infidelity were likewise introduced among the Romans. There was, indeed, a strong prejudice against foreign rites, as the whole fabric of the Roman Mythology was so intimately interwoven with the State and the whole character of the nation, that every innovation in religious matters seemed pregnant with the most disastrous consequences.

When, however, the Roman empire had extended itself over nations and countries of a most different character, when the national character of the Romans was brought into contact with other nations, there was no longer a remedy against their assuming foreign views and foreign rites of Religion. And thus it came to pass that Rome was the refuge of the fugitive gods of other nations; in Rome were concentrated all manner of religious forms and practices, as a common pantheon. Arnobius called Rome, therefore, a "*cultrix*

numinum cunctorum." Tacitus pronounces the capital to be the "*Urbs, quo cuncta undique atrocia aut pudenda confluunt, celebranturque.*" The syncretism which was observed in the last period of the Grecian Mythology, reached amongst the Romans its very highest point. The Emperor Severus had placed in his domestic sanctuary the statues of *Abraham*, of *Christ*, of *Orpheus*, and of *Apollonius* of Tyana!

When the national Religion was thus brought together with other elements, it lost in the estimation of the nation. The national deities were observed to sink lower and lower in the eyes of the people. And when liberty and independence were gone, the attachment of the nation to traditional customs and institutions was too weak to support the Religion any longer. The grave pursuits of literature and science had also died away; and the collection of gods from every quarter of the globe, was rather calculated to produce a desire in the mind of the nation for a universal Religion. The mind of the nation was paralysed at the sight of the decay of everything from which peace and comfort was expected; and how earnestly they desired something better and something more solid, under the feeling of a general debility and despair, has been already signified on a previous occasion. The Sun of Righteousness arose with healing in his wings, when the mighty nation had deeply felt its own inability to know God, and to worship the Lord of heaven and earth in an acceptable manner

without his divine revelation! The natural Religion of the ancient Romans was calculated, like all other systems of Paganism, to show the necessity of divine revelation. The world without it knew not God!

5. Whilst Paganism was spreading towards the west, south, and east, from the regions of Mesopotamia, another branch grew towards the north-west, and at length reached the western extremity of Europe. From what we can learn from Roman authors, the natural Religion of the different tribes of Germany, and Western Europe in general, was of a purely physical character. They worshipped, at the commencement of the Christian era, the heavenly bodies, with the elements of the earth. And thus we find how totally the reverse from what it was intended had been the Religion of all nations without revelation. They were to know and to worship the invisible Majesty of heaven from the things which are seen, and we find that, without exception, they worshipped the creature more than the Creator; instead of glorifying God, and being thankful, the Pagans, without exception, deified nature, and changed the truth of God into a lie.

The north of Europe has ever been inhabited by the Finnish, the Slavonian, the German, and the Celtic tribes. The general aspect of their Mythology bears a strong analogy to Oriental Paganism. This is exactly what we should expect; for, as far as traditional accounts can be relied upon, we must assume that these tribes themselves emigrated at different

periods subsequent to the original dispersion of mankind. The Celtic tribe first emigrated from the East; and, being followed by the *German* family, they were partly expelled from their abodes by the latter. We have no distinct account of the settlement of the Finns, and it is clear that the Slavonian is the youngest of the four tribes.

As regards the *Finnish family*, and its natural Religion, little more can be said upon the subject, than that its chief characteristic was the practice of magic, and a numerical mysticism. The practice of the art of magic was, probably, encouraged by the inhabitants of Lapland being physically predisposed to those operations of a disordered constitution, which were generally made to pass in ancient days under that term. The magical tendency of the Finns led them to have intercourse with imaginary beings of another world. The spirits were considered to be either bad or good; and according to this division they practised a *black* and a *white* magic, as circumstances might require.

According to their numerical mysticism, the number *three* was at the bottom of all their superstitious ideas. All their hymns were composed with reference to this all-important number. And also amongst the other tribes, the national anthems were all made to consist of trisyllabical lines. The three supreme deities of Lapland were the gods *Fiennes*, *Storjunkare*, and *Baiwe*. Fiennes was lord of the souls of men, and the

god of thunder and lightning. Storjunkare diffuses his blessings over water, wood and mountain; and the goddess Baiwe is the guardian of the unborn. This triad is modified amongst the Finns properly so called. Amongst them *Rawe*, the supreme godhead, was born from Kundtarris; and like Zeruana Akarana, Rawe becomes the author of good and evil sons. Six of his twelve sons are good, and are headed by *Wainamoinen;* whilst *Hüsi* is the leader of the evil party; which strongly reminds us of Ormuzd and Ahriman and their respective trains of good and evil spirits.

Amongst the Hungarians, the twelve deities are triplicated into thirty-six, a number which frequently occurs in the Chaldean and Egyptian systems of belief. The number seventy-two, as the duplicate of thirty-six, is also sacred amongst the ancient Germans, and it had probably reference to its being the fifth part of a year.

Amongst the ancient *Prussians* we discover three classes of deities. The first rank consists of Potrimpos, Perkunos, and Pikollos. The number of the second class consisted likewise of three deities. In the third class of deities we have twelve divinities; Potrimpos, one of the first rank of deities, has the three symbols of a *sheaf*, a *pot*, and a *serpent!* Pikollos is represented by the symbols of a *skull*, a *horse*, and a *cow*. If we count Potrimpos and his three symbols together with the second class of deities, we have the number seven. The number seven and

that of Pikollos would amount to eleven, and if we add Perkunos, of whom no symbols are mentioned, we obtain the third rank of deities, which consisted of twelve. These are the general outlines of the branch of the European Mythology, which was existing amongst the most northern of the four tribes.

Whilst we might look upon the Finns as a kind of northern Egyptians and Colchians, on account of their magic arts and witchcraft, we discern a touch of the character of the Romans in the *Slavonian branch*. The Slavonians, as the last emigrated of the four tribes, naturally borrowed here and there, as did the Romans in the later period of their religious history.

We have, again, *white* and *black* divinities, amongst this most numerous branch of European nations, which division savours strongly of Persian ideas. Amongst the Russians, the planetary deities seem to be quite forgotten, but they are again united amongst the Bohemians and the inhabitants of Poland, with the white and black species of deities. We have amongst them the worship of the subterraneous *Hiam*, and *Krok* the god of light, who at last subdues the former. If the idea of some learned men can be otherwise supported, that the Slavonian tribes descended from the Median race, their religious views, as well as the affinity which exists between their languages, are strongly in favour of this supposition. When other polytheistical notions were eventually engrafted upon the Religion of the Slavonians, we

must remember that they were the youngest of the emigrated tribes, and their geographical situation, besides, was such as to expose them in every direction to foreign influence. Hence it was by no means unnatural, when we find Grecian names of deities in use among the Bohemians; and when we find Slavonian, Wendish, German, Finnish, and Grecian divinities congregated in some of the maritime towns.

Whilst comparing the Finns with the Colchians or the Egyptians, and the Slavonians with the Romans, we may, with some propriety, look upon the *German branch* as the Grecians of the north. The peculiarity of the German branch of the Northern Mythology is that of Herolatry; it richly partakes, however, on the other hand, of the peculiarities which we discover amongst the Finnish and Slavonian nations. As amongst the Greeks, so amongst the Germans, the charms of poetry raised mortal men to the dignity of gods.

The German family, properly speaking, consists again of six subordinate branches, of which three occupied *Sweden*, *Norway*, and *Denmark*, and the other three are denominated *Franks*, the *Saxons*, and the *Goths*. The three northern divisions are generally known as *Scandinavians;* and they alone, amongst all others, were in possession of a sacred literature, which has been handed down to us in the sacred book which is known under the name of *Edda*.

According to the Edda, the Supreme Being, Allfadur or Alfadir, is an unknown god, from whom

sprang twelve inferior deities, who inhabit the twelve signs of the zodiac, and are known by the name of Asen. The chief of these twelve divinities is Othin, Wodan, Odhin, or Godan, from whence the Saxon "God." Those who consider Wodan to be a historical character, suppose that he emigrated from Asia into Scandinavia, shortly before the Christian era. Others look upon him as a mere personification of his doctrine, which had been brought from the East, and propagated in the North of Europe. He is associated with his sister and spouse Friya, Frea, or Frigga.

The Universal Parent, who is represented as unknown and eternal, sends light into the primitive darkness. *Ymer*, the prodigious giant, was the first being which he produced; and he was nourished, according to the legend, by the sacred cow *Audumbla*. This holy cow also aided the creation of the universe, by licking the primal man, *Bure*, out of a salt rock. Bure's son, called *Bör*, had three sons, *Othin*, *Wile*, and *We*. The giant Ymer fell by their hands, and all his descendants were drowned in his blood with the exception of one, who, with his wife, was saved during this *bloody flood, in a boat!* and from him sprang another race of giants. Out of the carcase of Ymer was now fashioned heaven and earth. The sons of Bör, on the other hand, created the first pair of our species, called Askr and Emba, from two wooden substances, which they obtained from the sea.

Othin and his benevolent Asen are opposed by the

evil *Loke;* who now destroys the son of Wodan, in order to avenge the murder of the giant Ymer. *Balder* being fixed to the rock, his painful motions are the cause of mighty earthquakes. With his death began the process of decay in gods and men. The gods are now to fight manfully against Loke and his malevolent agents; but they perish in the victory, as to their bodily existence. And what is more surprising, Balder's death is the cause of new life. The daily, monthly, and annual transitions from death to life, from warfare to victory, are types and shadows only of the final *conflagration* of the universe, from which a new world will arise, which will contain three large halls, one of reward, one of punishment, and one of an intermediate character. In the conflict with Loke, not only Balder but all the rest of the gods fall a sacrifice to the victory over Loke. The race of Loke also will perish. And it will be then that Allfadur, the unknown Great Parent of all things, will produce a new world, to which the first was merely preparatory. The highest good which the Scandinavian believer could obtain was to reach the Walhalla of Wodan and the heaven of supreme godhead.

These hopes animated the heroic spirit of the Scandinavian race, and produced that utter contempt for death, and that passion for the field of battle, by which the ancient Germans were so distinguished. Every one dying by the sword proceeded at once to the Walhalla of Wodan. Those who died not by the

sword proceeded to Hela, or Hell, the daughter of Loke. It was considered a misfortune and a shame not to die in the field of battle; and if natural death seemed to be coming on, they would cut wounds in their flesh, that Odin might receive them as warriors who had been slain in the battle-field! Again, as Wodan was to oppose the giants and the evil Loke, so also man is born to war and battle. In the likeness of Wodan, man is to make excursions all his life long against giants, dragons, and monsters. From these and similar ideas, which are strongly marked with a Persian character, we may, in a measure, explain that heroic spirit of the Germans, which at length overthrew the Roman empire, and laid the foundation for the organization of the European world.

Wodan, Thor, and Balder, are likewise the leading deities of the three southern branches of the German family, the *Franks*, the *Saxons*, and the *Goths*. We have the same fables amongst them. And the death of Sigfrit, who, in the Saxon and Frankish edition of the heroic legend, obtains his bride from the enemy, but perishes in the effort, is exactly what Balder's death is in the Scandinavian branch, namely, the giving the type and tone to the destruction of the whole race of gods and heroes. As the Edda concluded with the return of the Asen to the Supreme Allfadur; on the other hand, the southern branches of the German nations know nothing beyond the destruction of the heroes.

The three deities, Thor, Wodan, and Baldur, or Odin, seem to have been the chief and most general deities amongst the German tribes. This appears also from the form of abdication which was to be made on being admitted into the Church by baptism. According to Bonifacius, they were to declare, amongst other things, the following words :—

"End ek forsacho allum Diabolus werkum, end Wordum Thunaer, ende Woden ende Saxen Ode, ende allam them Unholdum, the hira Genotas sint."

The heroic and astronomical elements of the German Mythology are closely visible in its whole frame. The astronomical character has been preserved in the Saxon names of the days of the week. It is a most remarkable thing that the Pagan inhabitants of Western and Northern Europe should agree, in adopting the hebdomadal division of time, with the calendars of the Jews, the Egyptians, the Hindoos, the Chinese, the Arabs, the Assyrians, and the Peruvians in the West of America. The division of time into seven days has been made without reference to the duration of either the motions of the moon, or the tropical orbit of the sun. It has, indeed, been thought that the week had reference to the accidental duration of the phases of the moon; yet this division was practically useless. As the period of four weeks coincided neither with the solar nor with the lunar month, it would have been necessary either to divide one

week between two months, or to make perpetual intercalations.

The fact that the Romans besides reckoned their time by ninths, or eighths, and the ancient Greeks by tenths, or decades, only shows the practical inconvenience of the division into seven days, which they nevertheless retained by making the sun, the moon, and the five ancient planets preside over the hebdomadal division. And we can only explain the existence of the division of time into seven days amongst all ancient nations, by assuming that it was one of those fragments of tradition, which were handed down from the first beginnings of the history of man and the creation of the world. It has not been derived from the Jews, but has escaped the fate of being utterly lost from the memory of the scattered tribes of the human race. The real character of the institution of the weekly division of time was indeed lost amongst the Gentile world, which was ignorant of God, the only true God. They retained the days of the week, but they never could account either for the origin or for the retention of a sacred but inconvenient method of numbering their days.

There seems, indeed, to have been some vague idea left amongst the Pagans, of the primitive character of the hebdomadal division, as the original measure of time which was given to man, independent of the times and seasons which were given by the motions of the heavenly bodies. "God blessed the

seventh day, and hallowed it," and made it a day of rest. Indeed the *Lotus*, which was a most sacred emblem and symbol amongst the ancients, seems to point to that holy day of rest amidst the six days of labour and toil. In the middle of its six petals, which fade and wither so soon, is enthroned the crowned ruler with the seed of future vitality. On a Pagan altar of the Mythology which we are now considering, and which has been discovered in Germany, are seen the seven days of the week, represented by the figures of the presiding deities. But what is remarkable, is the fact, that, between the figure of Frea and Saturnus, or between the sixth and the *seventh day*, is represented a *genius with a horn of plenty!* Monday was a sacred day amongst the Grecians; Tuesday amongst the Persians; Wednesday amongst the Assyrians; Thursday amongst the Egyptians; and Friday amongst the Joins, a heretical sect of the Buddhists, as well as amongst the ancient Arabs.

The Pagans have, therefore, retained the division of time into seven days. That, however, the real meaning of the institution of the week was lost at an early period, is shown from the circumstance, that they placed the heavenly bodies to preside and rule over the days of the week successively. The great antiquity of this superstition is apparent from the fact, that they all make the same heavenly bodies preside over the same days of the week, in the same order. The hebdomadal division of time is clearly of

divine origin; the worship of the heavenly bodies as connected with these days must have been made prior to the dispersion of the human race from the plains of Babylonia; for how could we find them exactly in the same order amongst nations which could have had no intercourse after the dispersion? With all Pagan nations of importance the solar deity reigns the first day of the week; then follow in due order the Moon, Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, Venus, and Saturn.

As regards the circumstance, that amongst these seven days the Pagans considered one of them as particularly sacred, we recognise a faint shadow of "*the Sabbath of the Lord;*" but as the seven days have been associated with astronomical ideas, the holy day was far from having preserved the sacred character of the Sabbath. The Chaldæans and Egyptians are stated to have celebrated the seventh day in honour of Phænon, who is identical with the Grecian Kronos, and was considered to be the supreme Deity. Other Pagan nations sanctified a day out of seven, because the presiding deity was the national god of the people. Homer and Hesiod often mention the seventh day as sacred; but it was because it was the birth-day of Phœbus, the god of light, which was celebrated by the Grecian games. And when, therefore, Josephus maintained that there was no city in which the ancient Sabbath was not celebrated, he only errs in considering the *Sabbath* to be of the same import as the holy Monday of the

Greeks. The inhabitants of Mysore, in India, are described as keeping the same day as a day of rest, especially from all work in which their cattle are required. On Monday, however, is the sacred bull to be worshipped amongst them. Our Saxon ancestors worshipped Odin, or Wodan, above all other gods. Their sacred day, therefore, was Wednesday. That our Saxon word, God, is derived from Wodan, is evident, from the fact, that the inhabitants of the Netherlands still denominate Wednesday *Godansday!*

Sun-day was sacred to the sun; for, in worshipping the sun, the Germans made no exception to the rest of the Pagan world. The holy fires, called *nedfyr* or *nodfyr*, which were kindled at the times of equinoxes and solstices, were part of these deep-rooted superstitious rites, which were continued after their being converted to Christianity; and it was only by repeated prohibitions that they were at length suppressed. *Monday* was sacred to the moon; and it is well known that the new and full moons were of the greatest importance in the general consultations and projects of warlike expeditions. Nor does this exclude the circumstance, that some tribes may have associated the Hertha, or the earth, with the lunar goddess. According to Egede, the barbarous Greenlanders ascribed a favourable influence to the moon; and they believed that this deity now and then came down to visit their wives. The latter, in order to prevent it from taking any familiar intercourse with them,

are careful to spit upon their fingers, and to rub themselves before they fall asleep! From similar reasons, young maidens are afraid to stare at the moon for any length of time. And at the time of an eclipse of the moon, no woman ventured to go abroad! *Tuesday* was sacred to Mars, or to Thuisto, the patriarch of the Germans, and the son of the mother Earth. *Wednesday* was Godan's or Wodan's day, who, according to Paul Warnefried, is the same as Mercury. *Thursday* was sacred to Thor, the god of thunder. He is called the Most Mighty, but loses his life in killing the great serpent Midgard. Loke was the parent of this great serpent, and Thor, one of the twelve peers, is said to have bruised the head of this serpent Midgard with his mace. It was farther believed of him, that, in his final engagement with the reptile, he indeed destroyed it, but was suffocated by a flood of poison which the dying creature vomited against its enemy. Frea was the goddess of *Friday;* and whilst sacrifices were made to Thor at the seasons of famine and plague, and to Wodan at the time of war, the *fair* goddess was honoured with oblations on the day of marriage. *Saturday*, as the last day of the week, was placed under Sader or Saturn.

This hebdomadal division of our Saxon ancestors, as well as the above legend of the serpent, which had been bruised by the mighty Thor, reminds us of the discovery of a most interesting sacrificial vessel, which was found in the year 1639 by a Danish peasant.

It was a horn of gold, embossed in parallel circles, of rude workmanship. These circular compartments are seven in number, referring, doubtless, to the presiding deities of the days of the week. In five, out of the seven circles, the figure of a serpent is seen in various attitudes. One circle, for instance, represents a boy or a woman kneeling, in a state of nudity. The extended arms are held up to heaven; on each side of the figure is a large serpent in the attitude of attack. In the second compartment of this circle the same naked figure appears flying before a serpent, which pursues. Another circle represents a figure seated on the ground, with the hands brought together, as if in the act of prayer.

It will not be difficult to recognise in these circumstances, the caricatures of truths which are as old as the institution of the hebdomadal division and the origin of the Sabbath of the Creator of the universe.

Yet, with all this, we have in the Religion of our ancestors a *Religion of nature;* and as far down as the eighth century of our present era, we read of "*de simulacro, de conspersa farina, de simulacris de pannis factis. De simulacro, quod per campos portant. De ligneis pedibus vel manibus pagano ritu;*" which intimates the lowest species of Pagan idolatry, amongst the ancestors of the Teutonic race. But if similar things lower our estimation of the merits of the natural Religion of the ancient Germans, still more so do their ideas of the state of men after

death. They believed, indeed, in the immortality of the soul, but the future life was considered a mere continuation of the present scenes of our existence. According to the Edda, the noble heroes enter the Walhalla of Odin, but they do nothing in this heaven of the god of war but what they did on earth. They feast together, drinking out of the skulls of their enemies whom they slew upon earth, and out of large horns, such as the writer observed to be in use amongst the Abyssinians, and others nations of the East.

The *Celtic* division of the population of Western and Northern Europe, though last in order, was the most ancient amongst them. The account which is current amongst them of the creation of the world, is closely allied to those systems of cosmogony which are mixed up with astronomical and astrological ideas. Whilst the doctrine of the final conflagration of the universe is brought forward in a prominent degree, as in the other branches of the Northern Mythology, we have the transmigration of the soul, and therefore also the doctrine of its immortality. When we think of the surprise which this Pythagorean dogma created amongst the ancient Greeks, we may infer that the Western system of belief was in this respect superior to the Grecian Mythology. It was, no doubt, owing to this doctrine, that the Germans were inspired with that marked contempt of death, and with that extraordinary heroism by which they were distinguished.

Similar to the Edda of the German tribes, the Celtic Mythology knows nothing of eternal punishment; and as the doctrine itself, so also the time allotted for the purification of the soul savours clearly of oriental origin. The funeral pile amongst the Galli was a symbol of the final conflagration of the universe. The planetary character of the Gallic divinities is suffiicently evident from the short accounts which Cæsar has bequeathed to us. The chief seats of the Celtic belief were on the *Island of Great Britain;* and it was here that the national bards saved many a relic of Druidical tradition from falling into oblivion. That British Druidism underwent many serious changes, appears distinctly from the accounts which have been handed to us.

As in many other instances, the account of the creation of the world has been confounded with the ancient traditions of the flood. The latter catastrophe appears also here, as in India and Greece, to have assumed a local character. The lake of Llion breaks out, and all the inhabitants are drowned excepting *Dwywan* and *Dwywach*, who were saved in a *boat;* and the generation after the flood date their origin from these highly favoured individuals. The sacred bulls of *Hu* drew the *Avanc* to the shore, to prevent the lake from overflowing again. *Hu* is one of the most distinguished characters in the Druidical system. He is the man of the waters, the Narayana of the West. He is the lord of the land as well as of the sea. He is the solar deity. His

image was placed upon a high pillar, and was shaped in the form of a man. Whilst his face was irradiated with the solar rays, he had a flaming wheel upon his breast, and before it was kept a perpetual fire. *Hu* is the Supreme Deity, the lord of the heavens, and, in a local sense, the lord of the British islands. He is the god of Mona, and has every where his sacred islands, fields, and lakes, where he once appeared and walked with his worshippers. As his names and titles, so also his symbols are innumerable.

As *Hu* is conceived to be the solar deity, so *Ceredwin*, his spouse, appeared in the character of the moon. As Hu, so also Ceredwin has many names, symbols, and rites; and they both together seem the great parents of the Druidical Polytheism, and the mysteries by which the system was made notorious. For as the Finnish, so also the Celtic branch of the Western Mythology was eminently distinguished by its mystical and magical tendency. Such was the Religion of our ancestors!

Blessed be God the Father of our Lord Jesus, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away. Forasmuch as we know that we were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from our *vain* conversation, *received by traditions from our fathers;* but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a

lamb without blemish and without spot; who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifested unto us in these last times!

6. It would have been interesting to dive deeper into the religious systems of ancient Egypt, Greece, Rome, and the Western parts of Europe; but as they are eradicated from the earth, *which is the Lord's*, we may leave them on the field of battle, where Christianity has triumphed over them, and made a show of them openly. They will ever remain standing monuments to humble man, to testify how little he has accomplished in religious matters without special revelation, how poor mankind would be if they were confined for religious comfort to these huge carcases of the stupendous efforts of the wisest, bravest, and most civilized nations of the world. They carried in themselves the germs of decay and dissolution, and therefore they are vanished. We have, at the same time, a very sure pledge of the final destruction of the Oriental Pantheon; as all are members of the same body, branches of the same tree, the productions of the same misguided and erring human race.

In taking a comparative view of the Oriental and Occidental branches of Paganism, we observe a striking difference between them. Oriental creeds proceed from an infinite Deity to a finite world. Western Mythologies open their speculative career with finite creatures, and end with the infinite Deity. Both seek the union of man with the deity. In the East we have

to this end incarnations of the deity; in the West, we have deifications of men. In the East, the human mind strove with no ordinary powers to be emancipated from the shackles of the material world, and for liberty in the great unknown and infinite Being, who is a Spirit; but, alas! it fell into the grossest Materialism which could be imagined. In the West, man created his own heaven, his own gods, and made the most strenuous efforts to become like unto God. But how his eyes were opened after eating of this forbidden fruit! How fearfully the attempt to produce the Deity from human resources was revenged in the tragical end of the Western Mythology! When the Romans had obtained universal dominion, they lost their liberty, and were degraded to be slaves. When the Grecians became aware of their greatness, when arts and sciences were in their fullest bloom, they felt the workings of decay! Instead of having leisure to glory in their uncommon achievements, they felt that they were poor and needy. Nothing was left but a deified world; and as such a world could not give satisfaction to the Grecian mind, that world also was to be done away. The Neo-Platonists left nothing in the end but an unknown Deity and finite *appearances*. The Grecian mind commenced its speculations where the Oriental mind had ended; and it ended where the latter had commenced. And as the starting point of natural Religion in the West coincided with the point where Oriental speculation had

ceased, the whole circuit of the natural Religion of the Pagan world was for ever completed. It found a sepulchre of its own making. In finally retiring to its poor beginnings, it passed judgment upon its own folly and weakness ; and this judgment has been confirmed by the experience and the history of every succeeding generation.

We have seen in the course of our argument that Western Mythology has encouraged a taste for science and the fine arts. This is its chief merit, indeed, the only thing that can be said in its praise. The natural Religion among the nations of Northern and Western Europe being more rough, it was calculated to foster a spirit of military prowess and heroism. This is a laudable quality, but far too insignificant to be the sole blessing which natural Religion conferred upon Europe. Mythology in the East failed to produce either the one or the other effect upon mankind. All that can be said of its influence is, that it has ever cherished the most abandoned sensuality, and fostered the most desperate depravity of human nature. And drawing thus perpetual nourishment from this never-failing source of a debasing and brutalizing corruption, it still thrives, or, at least, has been able to maintain its existence, whilst the other branches of the same tree have exhausted their strength and withered, under the influence of the Sun of righteousness, who at once brings judgment and healing in his wings. It was

first of all shown in the East, that man was *flesh;* and here we have the pillars of Oriental Paganism. Eastern systems of belief are the most formidable, not only because they are the most antique and the most systematic, but chiefly, also, because they are most akin and analogous to the moral degeneracy of a depraved humanity. Yet we shall see, before concluding this present chapter, that its hour of visitation is approaching fast even now.

From what we have now seen of Oriental and Occidental Mythological creeds, we find that they all uttered in succession such feelings as press sorely upon the Pagan mind. They seek after God; but as they seek amiss, God recedes farther and farther from their horizon. We have scattered truths here and there, but in all systems of Paganism together we have nothing equivalent to the truth as it is in Jesus. In natural Religion, we have images only and Mythology. In true Religion, we have divine history, and sound words of doctrine. As Paganism gave no solid comfort to a comfortless world, its several systems either perished, or were petrified. Having passed a certain round, they became stationary, and dried up. Whilst Christianity has ever been the salt of the earth, and the leaven which is leavening "*the whole lump,*" spurious Religion must sooner or later terminate its career in a solution of its component parts. The Spirit of life is working in true Religion, and the fire which it kindled upon earth is spreading far and wide

in every direction. This has been especially the case during the last and present centuries. According to statistical estimates, there were in the last century about one hundred and forty millions of Mohammedans, two or three millions of Jews, six hundred and fifty-seven millions of Heathen, and two hundred millions of Christians. The number of Christians in the last century has been increased by forty-five millions, and it increases still more rapidly in the present century; whilst the number of other sects remains essentially the same! This is not to be wondered at, when we remember that it is against the principles of most false Religions to admit converts from other denominations. The Hindoo, for instance, would be horrified at the idea of receiving a foreigner into religious communion with himself.

As we discovered in Pagan creeds noble relics of a better state of things; so we noticed, on the other hand, anticipations of truths which futurity only was able to unfold to their minds. Pagan creeds are emphatically Religions of nature,—as Religions of this world, they will enjoy what they only could hope for; they will reap where they have not sown; they will behold that which they are required to believe! As Religions of nature, and creeds of pleasure, they never open reasonable prospects of happiness beyond this narrow sphere of existence. Yea, the impatient nature of spurious Religion anticipated truths which could only be brought to a

sound state of maturity in future periods of the history of true Religion; and these truths naturally became miserable caricatures. Paganism in this respect was a hot-house, as it were, in which the exotic plants of futurity are placed into an unnatural ground, and forced with an unnatural rapidity. The notorious Shibboleth of Pantheism, "*That God may be all in all,*" (1 Cor. xv.) is one of those noble truths; but one which can only be brought to maturity at the end of this present economy of divine revelation. It was impatiently anticipated in the development of natural Religion, and not unfrequently placed at the beginning of religious speculations. Hence it cannot be wondered at, that this hot-house has brought forth many blossoms, but no fruit. In this unnatural mixture of falsehood and truth, in this early appearance of blossoms and flowers, lies the attraction and charm of Pagan Religions. Its spell could only be broken, when these fair blossoms and flowers had withered and fallen off without producing fruit, and when its impotency and vanity could be no longer hid from the deluded race of man. It has been declared by agricultural people, that chaff will grow for a time upon being sown in the field, but that after a short period it will naturally wither, having no substance from which it could maintain itself longer. This was the case with Paganism in the western parts of the Eastern hemisphere, at the beginning of the Christian era; and the remarkable aspect of the East in modern days presents a similar spectacle.

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It is one of the characteristic signs of the present age, that the Western portion of the human family has been drawn with an irresistible and unprecedented feeling to the native soil of its existence. The politician, the philosopher, the philanthropist, and the Christian believer, have their attention equally riveted by foreboding phenomena which are risen on the Eastern horizon, and which seem pregnant with portentous events. As children in mature age return to cherish an aged and broken-hearted parent, being prompted by the tender emotions of filial affection and gratitude; so the younger members of the human family in the West seem to turn homeward to administer the cordials of temporal and spiritual consolation to an aged parent.

Whilst, however, from various motives, the nations of the West look to the East, we find that this feeling of sympathy has been responded to in the latter place in a no less remarkable degree. As the man of Macedonia once stood in the vision before Paul the Apostle, saying, "*Come over and help us;*" so the Oriental nations, without exception, appear now before their Western brethren with uplifted hands, saying: "*My sons, children of my youth, come over and help us!*"

It is, we understand, the experience of physicians, that madness often disappears on the approach of death, or after some very severe delirious fever; that, after years of unconscious insanity, the faculties awake from their torpid state and become once more sound and sober. Be this as it may, it is a notorious fact,

that the Eastern tribes of the human family awake as if from a state of intoxication and madness, into which they have fallen upon drinking from the "*cup of the fornications of the mother of harlots.*" As regards their systems, Oriental creeds have long ago finished their course. They are a mass of inconsistent and incoherent elements, of a heterogeneous character. But the patience of the Oriental nations is as well nigh exhausted in these present days, as that of the Western nations was at the coming of Christ. There can be no standing still any longer. And the devotees of these systems of spurious Religion are brought to a point of degradation from which it is impossible to sink any deeper.

Extensive travels, not only amongst Oriental Churches, but also amongst the Mohammedan and Pagan tribes of Africa and the East, have convinced the author, that there is at this period such a heaving and fermenting in the mouldering mass of Oriental superstition, such a dissatisfaction with every existing form of spurious Religion, as will terminate, sooner or later, in religious convulsions of a most important character; convulsions upon a grander scale, more sudden, more intense, and more striking, if possible, than the political earthquakes which have been agitating the whole of civilized Europe. Oriental nations at large seem, even now, to feel more deeply than they probably ever felt before, that the resources of their own imaginary power and wisdom are finally

exhausted. The general confession is now being wrung from the numerous tribes of the East, that help must finally come from above. Like that of the Canaanites of old, their heart is melting within them for despair; and they are stunned, as it were, by a mysterious apprehension of the pending dissolution of their national creeds. And the writer feels that he speaks no less advisedly when he adds, that not only has fear and pain taken hold upon them, as of a woman in travail, but the conviction of the ultimate triumph of Christianity is likewise more and more deepening in the Oriental mind; and this, at times, under circumstances where it was to be least expected. It is evident that the approaching crisis in the religious complexion of the East involves the temporal welfare and the eternal happiness of the majority of the human race! And should not the Church of Christ increase her exertions a hundredfold to follow the conqueror, whose wheel has seemed to tarry in coming?

The beginning of our history is in the East, in *Asa* or *Asia*, which signifies the "*holy land.*" From thence it proceeded in a westerly direction until it reached the extremities of the West. It seemed as if an invisible hand carried the lamp of religious, civil, and moral advancement and civilization from land to land. But it is remarkable, that countries which for centuries enjoyed its light, sink back into darkness; whilst others emerge and take their stand among civilized people, until again they, in their own turn,

are deprived of the candlestick which had given them light for a season.

When thus, upon the principles of unalterable justice and righteousness, the history of the spiritual, moral, and intellectual development had been carried to the boundaries of the western parts of the Eastern hemisphere, and had already set one foot on the shores of America, it was a question, whether America now would become the scene upon which Religion and civilization would be enthroned; and whether Europe was destined to fall back into darkness, as was already partially the case with its south-eastern extremities, and with other lands and nations of Asia, which once enjoyed the blessings of this lamp.

It is not difficult to divine, that if the irreligious tendency of Europe gains the ascendency, the European world will be humbled and thrown down from its proud elevation. Whilst, however, America in the West enjoys a goodly measure of the beatifying light of this heavenly lamp, it is pretty clear already that the history of the march of true Religion and civilization is now turning and pointing back to the cradle of mankind, and the birth-place of human existence. "For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord, thy Redeemer." From some mysterious cause, the spread of true Religion had passed the

vast continent of Africa, and touched only with the hem of its garment the northern extremities of that benighted land; but, on its retrograde march, peace and civilization will penetrate and bless that land also!

We may, indeed, judge with more safety of events, when they actually are being fulfilled, or are lying behind us as historical facts. It is natural that the quiet preparations which necessarily precede all important events, should not strike our senses in the same degree as the rush of events, when they actually come to pass. Yet the state of the atmosphere, the direction of the wind, the face of the sky, which have been already compared to the signs of the times by Him who "*knew all things*," enable the intelligent observer to judge with comparative certainty of the impending storm, or of the approaching fair weather. And it is likewise in the power of the "hypocrites" of the present day, to anticipate, from the present signs of the times, what is to come.

Lest, however, there remain a doubt upon the mind of the reader, as to the solemn truth that the Western nations are on the eve of their decline, we may point to the fading flowers of Spain, and Portugal, and the Dutch. Germany, which strives to make itself a "name," and to build a "tower, whose top may reach unto heaven," will be miserably disappointed in its ungodly career. Who will venture to predict the coming greatness of France, when all indicates disso-

lution and decay? And shall we omit to remember, that the nearer Great Britain, as the brightest star of European greatness, approaches its point of culmination, the nearer will come the solemn hour of its decline? It is with deep solicitude that we have observed certain symptoms of late in this country, which seem to intimate as if England contemplated walking in the paths of the ungodly Continent. The revolutionary commotions of Europe in latter days were severally marked with the character of a lawless insubordination to the laws of God and man. It was not only the desire to put down certain institutions, the existence of which caused uneasiness to a more civilized people. The chief supporters of the movement were "filthy dreamers, that defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities." The principle which moved the whole mass, was a spirit which opposeth itself "above all that is called God, or that is worshipped." The people, if they at all tolerated their former rulers, were determined to have no longer kings who ruled over them "*Dei gratia.*" They were wearied of being governed "*by the grace of God.*" They wished a government which was "*Populi gratia,*" not "*Dei gratia.*" They blotted it out from the decrees of the Government, and from the superscription of their coins. Kings should henceforth rule by *the grace of men!* Now, we are averse to a prostitution of sacred things; but in the present case, the anxiety of the people to abolish the words "Dei gratia" was

clearly produced by that spirit of infidelity, which makes people take counsel together against the Lord, and against his Anointed. The same people who made war against "Dei gratia" in the title of their rulers, contemplated abolishing matrimony, and every thing that is considered holy and religious! They were "ungodly men, turning the *grace of our God* into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ." They were "raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever."

It may appear of small importance to some of our readers, that those significant words "*Dei gratia*" should for the first time be omitted in the "*image and superscription*" of the new coin which has lately been issued in this land. But observing the tendency of this degenerated age, we confess we take alarm at this innovation. England, with its favoured sons and daughters, may well say: "*By the* GRACE OF GOD *I am what I am.*" If England disown the giver of its distinguished privileges; if England deny the Lord who bought us; if England desire that her most gracious Queen should rule no more over us by THE GRACE OF GOD; *then, Ichabod, the glory has departed!* Whilst the writer travelled on the Continent, during the latter part of its intestine commotions, he had frequent opportunities of hearing it stated in various quarters, that England was saved from these troubles because the

English were a God-fearing nation, and because the Government of England acknowledged its dependence upon Almighty God! But did the Government of this land preserve this high character lately, when it refused to respond to the feeling of the nation in commanding a day of national humiliation, on account of the fearful ravages of Cholera?

Could we lift up our voice like a trumpet, and make it heard "from Dan even to Beersheba," we would implore the Christians of Great Britain, in the words of the Apostle, to *contend* earnestly for the faith which was delivered unto the Saints! Let not England be ashamed of her own God, who alone "*is able to keep her from falling.*" Let her children walk in the truth, as we have received a commandment from the Father. Let not England depart from *the grace of the living God*, lest she lose those things which she has "wrought, but receive a full reward." *Righteousness exalteth a nation; but the ungodly bring it down to the ground!* The nations that have sown to the wind are now reaping the whirlwind! Ireland, too, has been declining fast, chiefly from religious and moral causes. These are days of sifting and purging; times when the judgments of the Almighty are abroad amongst the nations of Christendom. "*For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God, and if it first begin at us, what shall be the end of them that obey not the Gospel of God?*"

Oriental nations, too, are brought forward in such

a degree as they have never been before. Tribes, whose names were scarcely known to our ancestors, are now invaded by European armies, and guided by European diplomacy. Almost in the centre of Asia, kingdoms are overthrown, and a new order of things is introduced. The slumbering empire of the Chinese has at last been roused by the thundering accent of unknown strangers from the most distant West. Yet we need not accumulate evidence of what has been said.

It is the Lord God Almighty who gives light to the lamp, and whose invisible hand has impressed a direction upon its travels through the earth. Never has there happened anything new and blessed,—never has there been wrought anything great and mighty,—without the impulse of religious belief. And now, again, it will be a *religious movement*, which already agitates and troubles the stagnant waters of the East, to give to its tribes that new form which they demand. The honour to enlighten, to civilize, and to prepare mankind for this world and for the life to come, belongs to the Gospel. (1 Tim. iv.) The events, however, which are of a religious character, are commonly so interwoven with the ordinary course of things, that perhaps the beholder fails to recognise, amidst the variety of external circumstances, the true hidden cause, which controls a complicated system of events. God often hides, as it were, the greatest events in his kingdom, under the general course of the things of this world. Events of a worldly character produce

more excitement, create more surprise, engage more attention; whilst God's own counsels are accomplished amongst them, as it were, in sacred quietude!

It often *appears* as if God's kingdom was a stranger in the world, who by some accident or other went astray among the worldly scenes which rivet the attention of the multitude on the stage of general history. But whosoever is wise, and inquires after God, will know which is the reality and what are the appearances. And whilst perhaps also for the future the political, intellectual, and social part of the great problem be all that may strike the superficial observer, the wise will recognise a fulfilment of what God hath before declared by the mouth of his prophets. The word of prophecy standeth sure: the lamp of God seemed to recede more and more to the West, but it was turned backward to the East. God has roused a thousand hearts to pray for the coming of his kingdom; he has also made a thousand hands to labour in this long-neglected portion of his vineyard; and, according to his purpose, a thousand events are now bringing about the final destruction of those spurious systems of natural Religion, which are the curse of Eastern countries.

7. If it be objected to the above definition of the general character of the natural Religion of the Pagan world, by which it is proved to be ignorant of the fundamental principles of general Religion, that the *flowers* of Pagan speculation on religious matters

were contained in the philosophical portion of the systems of Mythology, it will be necessary to glance, lastly, at what human reason has accomplished in this particular sphere. It is certainly true, that if human reason could have created and unfolded religious truth from its own resources, we might expect that certain distinguished heroes of thought should have bestowed so desirable a boon upon humanity, in the religious and philosophical firmament of which they shone as bright luminaries of the world of intellect. And if the history of religious philosophy did exemplify that "*infallible*" reason, which has been looked upon by some as the fountain of religious truth, we might likewise expect that those who possessed an extraordinary measure of these faculties, would agree, if not in all, yet at least in the most important points. Truth is harmony with itself, and can never involve contradiction.

Now in going about to establish a certain point, or to elucidate a certain truth, there is danger that only those things are drawn from a mass of materials which will best suit the purpose. There is danger in the subject before us, that in diving here and there into systems of philosophy, with a view to measure their depth and to weigh their merits, we may forget to do justice to their real character. To give, for instance, only "*discerpta membra*" from the documents of revealed Religion, would be considered unfair, and we would protest against such a mode of proceeding.

In giving, therefore, an estimate of the efforts of the Pagan mind to solve the problem in which man and the world are involved, we intend to deal fairly.

In adverting to the religious speculations of the ancient Greeks, whom we are taught from our childhood to venerate, we find that the Ionian philosophers worshipped one or other of the different elements, as the prime cause of all things in existence. In one instance it was water; in another it was fire; in another it was air; and again in another it was a composition of these elements. Heraclitus considered the universe to be an eternal and living being, and his religious philosophy contained merely physical speculations. Anaximander believed in an immortal, infinite, divine cause of the universe, which contained, as a mixed being, the elements of the world. Anaxagoras is said to have been the first, prior to Socrates, who acknowledged an intellectual supreme cause, and yet the production of the world is conceived to have been brought about upon mere physical principles.

The great defects of the philosophical systems prior to Socrates, are especially marked with regard to the immortality of the soul. The undefined world of shadows which is pictured forth by the poets, was but a poetical dream, which, upon sober reflection, could no longer delude, nor yet bridle the spirit of scepticism and infidelity. Pythagoras, who has the honour of first having taught the dogma of the immor-

tality of the soul in the West, had introduced it from the East, and with it he propagated the error of its transmigration. Socrates affirmed that human wisdom had little or no value whatever; and he esteemed it the highest fortune to ascertain the will of the gods. As he felt convinced it could not be found by reason alone, he recommended oracles and divinations as means of becoming acquainted with the will of the deities.

The contradictory opinions which were consequently started, and supported with the greatest ingenuity; the confusion of ideas, and the growth of a spirit of scepticism, had a most unfavourable influence upon the nation. Whilst one party fostered sentiments which led to the denial of a deity, the other maintained views which seemed equally irrational and monstrous; inasmuch as they implied the extravagant idea, according to which the material world was a mere illusion. One of their Sophists opened his doctrine by denying all truth, and he declared that if there were such a thing, it would be beyond the apprehension of our faculties. The Grecian Philosophy despised the national creed, but it could give nothing better in its stead.

Philosophy, however, reached its highest point in the days of Plato and Aristotle; and if human reason were able to furnish the knowledge of what is good and holy, we might naturally expect it from these princes of Philosophy. They had done much to establish their fame with all future generations. Every

succeeding hero of human thought has first sat with a docile mind at the feet of these great men. We might, therefore, expect all and everything from the researches of these deep-thinking and high-soaring intellects.

The leading idea of the Philosophy of Plato is, that there is dwelling in man a remnant of a prior, comparatively far more perfect, glorious, and spiritual condition, or an indistinct recollection of a former state of perfection. This noble remnant was reduced to a mere recollection by the imperfect and changeable character of the world around us. It was thus that we were filled with changeable and erroneous ideas. Yet this recollection within us is revived when we discover something great and extraordinary around us. The admiration of these remaining shadows of perfection produces a state of rapture, a species of inspiration, from which all knowledge of higher truths is to be derived. Truth, therefore, is the result not so much of a cool, deliberate induction of the reasoning faculties, as the gift of a kind of supernatural inflation. Plato, therefore, assumed a higher source of knowledge than that which is looked for by many in the human reason. And this is the distinctive character of his Philosophy. A feeling of the great need of help from above, is expressed in all his writings; and that he would have been thankful to hear the announcement, that "God is manifested in the flesh," may be understood after a deep investigation of his philosophical works.

The leading idea of the Philosophy of Aristotle cannot be so easily discovered, on account of a remarkable want of perspicuity, which has been complained of by some of his greatest admirers. It may be asked, how it came to pass that this distinguished man answered so darkly and unintelligibly to questions of so momentous a nature as the inquiries respecting the origin of the world, the character of its maker, and the destiny of man its inhabitant. He has ever been considered the master of thought and of language. He has ever been considered by philosophers as one of the keenest observers, and as one of the soundest judges in every department of knowledge and wisdom. He has ever been considered as the author of clear and definite reflection, who reduced the principles of thought to a systematic form. The simple answer to all this inquiry is, that Aristotle disowned the supernatural source of knowledge which was hinted at by Plato, and the need of which was felt by that great philosopher so deeply. Aristotle considered it to be unphilosophical to admit of any medium beyond reason and experience. Thus the great problem respecting God and the world remained unanswered.

Thus Plato and Aristotle had exhausted the storehouse of human speculations in religious matters; and though imperfectly understood by their cotemporaries, they have obtained an abiding influence upon the religious speculations of their successors. Even after the accumulation of the stores of knowledge during a

period of more than two thousand years, when the ideas of Aristotle respecting the solar system seem to us like that of a child, we may still say that Philosophy is either that of Plato, or of Aristotle, or a combination of both elements. Whosoever admits of any higher source of knowledge than that of human faculties, approximates to the reasonings of Plato. Whosoever confines himself to mere speculation in search of supernatural truth, treads in the footsteps of Aristotle.

As Grecian Philosophy gained universal applause, we may consider it as the flower of Pagan speculation. Oriental Philosophy is equally barren; there was no return to the labour of its husbandmen. It had leaves and flowers, but they have never been for the healing of the nations.

Well, therefore, may we say: "Amicus Socrates, amicus Plato, amicus Aristoteles, sed magis amica veritas." The Religious Philosophy of Paganism knew not God. In Greece, where the didactic Philosophy saw its proudest days,—at Athens, where it was enthroned,—its last effort was to rear an altar "to the unknown God." At Rome, the famous asylum of the fugitive gods of the Pagan world, the intellectual powers of Cicero, though rising far above his own age, could add nothing to the meagre store of religious knowledge which existed in his own days. Justin Martyr declared of the philosophers of his own day: "Most of them never think whether there be one deity, or whether there be many gods, whether

there be a providence, or whether there be none, as if such knowledge had nothing to do with our happiness." From the moment that Philosophy had reached its meridian in the lofty intellects of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, it began to decline. Reason revenged herself for the prodigious efforts with which it was tasked to discern the things beyond its horizon, by abandoning herself to the charms of a foul superstition.

The religious speculation of the Pagan world confesses the necessity of a revelation from heaven, and of the redemption of the world; but it could neither effect the one, nor realize the other. Those Philosophers in whose minds an ideal redemption seemed to be afloat, either overlooked the extent of the evil, or considered it necessary by way of transition. They could not invent the truth which should make the world free. Their ideal remedy could not radically cure a real disease. Human reason in Pagan Philosophy could indeed seek and feel after a Saviour, who is the way, the truth, and the life; but it could neither prophesy his coming, nor yet believe in him before his appearance. Christ was as much "the desire of all honest philosophers," as he was "the desire of all nations." When the zealous Porphyry had collected a number of ancient oracles, he declared, respecting his own motives, "What shall be the use of such a collection will be best understood by those *who at last, amidst the painful desire after truth, wish*

for the appearance of the deity, in order to obtain through authentic instruction rest from tormenting doubts." Pagan Philosophy has, therefore, left the natural man "without God in this world," and "without hope" as to the world to come!

We mentioned on a former occasion, that we must needs confine our inquiries to the speculations of Paganism, if we hope to obtain a right view of what may properly be considered the articles of natural Religion. As, however, modern philosophers avowedly abstain from drawing the materials of their speculations from revelation, we may as well touch upon the results of their investigations. The Philosophy of Plato and Aristotle had too clearly marked the two paths of speculation, not to remain the models for future ages. There was, therefore, a repetition of that restless driving and shifting about of unintelligible forms and hollow ideas; a strife of words which engenders a sectarian spirit; another sowing of Philosophy to the wind, and another reaping of the whirlwind, in the Christian era.

In the fifth century, Paganism was subdued by Christianity, and Christianity, again, was ere long infected with the elements of Paganism. The rites of the Pantheon had taken refuge in the Christian Church, and the philosophical subtleties of the schools stole an entrance into her "sound form of doctrines." The ill-starred alliance between the old Philosophy and the new faith, was brought about amongst the

voluble Greeks; and when learning revived in the West, similar trifles occupied the minds of the schoolmen; and the fomenting and fermenting of religious errors were by them repeated in the middle ages.

The revival of ancient literature had opened the fountains of Grecian errors; and the dross of scholastic elements was more and more purged away. But the revival of Philosophy in its Grecian purity, gave occasion to the revival of old, and the production of new, errors. It, indeed, seemed that the deeper single individuals would drink of the Grecian fountains, the more frequently they fell into notions which were destructive at once to genuine Religion and morality. Several followers of Aristotle mentally adored an "Anima Mundi," and denied the immortality of the soul. This was especially the case in Italy, about the time of the Reformation.

The ancient Philosophy never professed to be useful in matters of this life. It could not condescend to minister temporal blessings to mankind; as, indeed, it had nothing to do with the material world. A spirit of pride and unprofitableness animates the whole body of Philosophy from the time of Socrates down to the middle ages of the Christian era. The tree of Philosophy, as planted by antiquity, and watered by modern sages, produced many blossoms, but no fruit. Some good indeed must have been effected, as no controversy can be so idle as not to be useful in some measure. But the energy of such brilliant talents

must have been sadly misdirected; for how could they have failed to add to the stock of useful knowledge? There was no heritage of religious truth acquired by the labour of one generation, and bequeathed to the other; nor was there an accumulating of practical knowledge for the common things of daily life. Where Philosophy was in the days of Cicero, there it was still in the middle ages. The same sects were still battling with the same arguments, about the same questions which gender strife. Words, and words only, had been the fruit of the common toil of about sixty generations; and we cannot wonder that proud antiquity, with its high-sounding authorities, could at last keep mankind no longer in superstitious bondage. The sixteenth century was the time of fermentation, and it was only towards the end, that human intellect, upon the impulse of a religious character, began to recover its senses, and to open new paths of thought. Lord Bacon gathered in his own person the scattered elements of his own age, and, in leading Philosophy back to nature, and from nature to nature's God, he became the parent of Experimental Philosophy. Philosophy now brought forth much fruit; but the temporal blessings which it conferred upon the world, were owing to the revival which Philosophy experienced from the Spirit of true Religion! The sole praise, therefore, is due to Christianity, and not to the powers of human reason. The merits of the Baconian Philosophy were great and lasting, only because the

light of true and revealed Religion shone upon it. Because there was no sowing to the wind, but into good land, we have fruit, some fifty, some an hundredfold.

Upon descending to the days of Spinoza, we are struck with the contrast between a Philosophy, which has been rendered fruitful by the genial rays of revelation, and a Philosophy which is the indigenous plant of nature's own soil, and is watered by reason's own toil. We have nothing new; but a repetition of the errors of Hindoo Philosophy! Spinoza, who was neither a Jew nor a Christian by profession, is considered a most powerful character. But his Philosophy is nothing but a confounding of the Creator with the creature, which is a genuine feature of Paganism; for Paganism deifies nature, and dethrones nature's God. This monstrous offspring of human reason annihilates the very soul of true Religion, destroys the personality of the blessed Godhead, and actually denies existence to individuals! It deprives man not only of his moral liberty, but it actually does away with the difference of good and evil, in ascribing simple appearances to moral depravity and all manner of ungodliness. There could never exist a spark of religious feeling, for the system is without a personal deity. The fact, that the author of this wild system is said to have been a morally good and harmless man, can in no wise give security against the pernicious tendency of his philosophical creed; but it shows simply that the practice

of many a philosopher is much superior to his theory; and that a feeling of the insufficiency of the latter, rectifies, in some measure, the absurdities of his darkened mind, without his being aware of the fact. How different, therefore, the result of Bacon's Christian Philosophy, and the effects of the Pantheistical reveries of a bewildered brain!

The great philosopher, Locke, in his celebrated Essay on the Human Understanding, considers man to be a mere *tabula rasa*, with no innate ideas. Human reason could not obtain any knowledge without its being derived through our senses. Man is reduced to a dead marble plate, to which he would not even permit some of the ornamental veins, which are visible upon it. To the fundamental principle of his Philosophy, according to which, "Nihil est in intellectu, quod non prius fuerit in sensu," we might with much propriety oppose the other, "Nempe nihil est in intellectu, quod non fuerit in sensu nisi ipse intellectus." Whilst, however, that will ever remain true which a Continental philosopher has declared of Locke and his philosophical systems, when he said: "Inclinavit ad Socinianos quorum paupertina semper fuit de Deo et mente philosophia;" we do yet appreciate the testimony of that otherwise great man, which is calculated to humble the supremacy of reason.

If we descend farther with the rapid stream of time, we find that Philosophy, in the age of Leibnitz,

was opposed to all its previous forms and systems. But this new form of Philosophy reposed, nevertheless, in a measure, upon the Epicurean and the more modern atheistical systems. There was nothing done by this Philosophy to benefit the world, much less was there any discovery of divine truth. And how poor must have been our race towards the end of the seventeenth century, when its most distinguished heroes of thought had not yet gained sufficient courage to settle the momentous question, as to the existence of a world of spirits, in the affirmative! With these remarks we would not, however, depreciate the great and important services which this other great philosopher has rendered to the world in other paths of literature.

The prodigious efforts of Philosophy in the age of Kant are being tossed to and fro between the two chief sources of Philosophy, viz. the universe around man, and the "light that is within" him. Being wearied to death, the hero of this new Philosophy yields, with Locke, to experience. The greatest merit of this system will ever be in favour of our theme. Kant has demonstrated by his arguments, and shown by his own example, that human reason is in its element only when placed under the influence of observation and experience. Instead, however, of admitting that the knowledge of divine things can only be gained by internal experience of something divinely given; instead of assigning to human reason, in reli-

gious matters, a secondary position,—he again places reason upon the throne, under the mask of a certain artificial belief; and, as a bird taken in his own net, he yet hopes to escape from the confusion which he had created. Yet we cannot but admire the candour with which he writes to a brother philosopher, when he says: "It is very clear that reason would not have discerned the principles of morality to such perfection if the Gospel had not taught them beforehand in all their purity; although, after they have *once* been thus called into existence, it can be no longer difficult to convince every one of their justness and validity from mere reason."

And was it not Descartes who declared, that the Holy Scriptures were indeed able to teach better and higher things than he could propound in his system, inasmuch as he derived all his knowledge from the mere "*lumen naturale?*"

Being wearied by the toil of creating a new system of Philosophy, Fichte declared, in one of his last works: "We have, after all, started from Christianity with our philosophical researches; and upon its foundation we can alone find repose. Christianity has had its influence upon our whole education; and we should be nothing of all that we are now, if this mighty principle had not preceded us."

Jakobi, a most able opponent of Fichte, writes of his own personal experience in the following terms: "I do indeed, from the bottom of my heart, agree

with the complaints as to the unsatisfactory character of all our Philosophy; yet I can see no remedy." Again: "I should be happy to exchange my sickly philosophical Christianity for one of a historical and positive character. Altogether a Heathen in intellect, and a Christian in mind, I am afloat between two waters, which will not flow together; so that both deceive me. No sooner I fancy to be raised by the one, than I am drowned by the other."

We shall not trouble our readers with the mighty efforts which have been made in more modern days to avoid the necessity of being taught of God. There being no foundation in all these systems of spurious Philosophy, one gives way to the other. Plato, Aristotle, and a whole legion of Pagan and Christian philosophers, have all had their day of triumph; but a short period saw them spring up, and flourish, and wither like the flower of the grass. For all flesh is grass! How well might the Church of Christ erect one common monument to these bastard Philosophies, with the inscription: "Let them be as grass upon the house-tops, which withereth afore it groweth up: wherewith the mower filleth not his hand; nor he that bindeth sheaves his bosom." (Psalm cxxix.) "Certissimum est atque experientiâ comprobatum, leves gustus in Philosophiâ movere fortasse ad Atheismum, sed pleniores haustus ad Religionem reducere. Philosophia obiter libita a Deo abducit, pleniter hausta ad Deum reducit."

The Philosophy of reason and the wisdom of this world have amply demonstrated their fallacy and unprofitableness. They have ever proved broken cisterns, which yield no water. The Herculean efforts of the most eminent sages that ever breathed upon earth have always proved utterly futile and delusive.

> "An endless round the wearied soul must tread,
> Certain of nought, but calling blest the dead:
> Terrors are hanging o'er its fainting head,
> And hope no sooner born than withered!"

Human reason would wind its way for ever in endless circles and perplexing mazes, without advancing one step towards the only legitimate end of all its labours. As God once allowed the wise philosophers, metaphysicians, theorists, and hierophants some thousand years in which to exhaust their ingenuity and their fragments of tradition, before he offered them revealed and heavenly truth; so he still permits every renewed effort to spare the pride of weak and finite reason, to languish and to die its own natural death, with a view to confound the wisdom of this world, and thus to make them desirous after him by whom came grace and truth, and life and immortality. In Christ were hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge from the foundation of the world. As these treasures, however, are hid in his blessed person, no man knoweth the Son, except it be revealed of the Father. Philosophia quærit, Religio possidet veritatem.

8. Human nature from the beginning has never been self-taught; nor have the faculties of man been able to discover divine truth in the state of his primal integrity. Hence, upon the fall of man, the revelation became doubly imperative. Divine things are naturally above the human understanding. And if human reason could not have produced truth before the catastrophe of the fall, much less could we expect such to be the case, when, by the transgression of man, all his faculties became deranged. As our bodily eye, which is called the light of the body, is in itself a dark and not a luminous body, and cannot see without the reflection of light; so reason, as the light within us, is dark in itself without the light of special revelation. Our reason resembles the blind Theban soothsayer, to whom his daughter Manto described the flight of birds; and he prophesied according to her description! As the eye cannot see without light, so man, in his natural condition, is unable to discover the things of the Spirit, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are to be spiritually discovered. We are, indeed, inclined to deceive ourselves in these matters, by mistaking conception for reality, and a theoretical knowledge for actual experience. We mistake things which ought to be, for things which really exist.

Natural reason, with regard to revelation, is precisely what the eye is with regard to the natural light. Let us, therefore, beware of founding a kingdom of

reason, and prophesying its eternal duration. There is a wisdom which commences where human reason despairs. There is a spirit of knowledge which gives light where human reason is stricken with blindness. There is also a peace which *passeth all understanding*. The highest boast of sound reason will ever be, to acknowledge that there are a thousand things beyond its horizon; and it is imbecility not to admit this conviction. There is nothing more reasonable than to deny the powers of reason, where the nature of things demands implicit faith; and there is nothing more unreasonable than to deny the faculties of reason, when the nature of the subject demands nothing of faith. One party will deny reason; another party acknowledges nothing but reason. Whosoever receives the history of the Prophets and Apostles, believes them to have been men who received immediate revelations of divine things. They must, therefore, have been endowed with faculties differing from those which are common to the generality of men. But as they were men, in every sense of the term, there must yet be a faculty in human nature to receive immediate impressions of things revealed from God.

Thus the problem is solved why and how far human reason may eminently distinguish itself in fine arts, in sciences where the requisite materials are furnished to his mind, whilst the same individual in matters of Religion is utterly vague, blind, and imbecile, without special communication of light from above. In shutting

the eye against the light of revelation, man can obtain no more knowledge of spiritual objects than he could acquire proficiency in natural Philosophy without being placed under the tangible influence of the visible creation. And it may be observed, that all Pagan systems of belief go upon the supposition that a revelation of the deity had taken place at the commencement respecting religious truth.

To exclude and to depreciate reason in matters of Religion, and to speak lightly of its use, is to take away the eye through which as the only medium the divine light can reach the human soul. Although the eye be only a small and dark body of inert matter, yet if we remove or injure it, the whole body will be dark, were it even surrounded with the most brilliant light. Every skin, every nerve, and every one of its minutest component parts, is of the utmost service, and nothing can be injured without causing pain or offence. It is written in indelible characters in the history of genuine and spurious Religion, that revelation without reason is an unknown treasure, and will lead to fanaticism. On the other hand, whosoever excludes divine revelation from human reason, deprives the bodily eye of the natural light, and separates what God hath joined together.

Sound reason demands of man that he receive the testimony of God. Human faculties can do nothing without divine revelation. There can be no harvest without seed, no house without foundation, no diges-

tion without food, no reflection without aught to think upon. To bestow the gift of divine revelation upon any other than intellectual and reasonable beings, would be to throw pearls before swine; it would be furnishing materials where there is no power to receive, digest, or arrange them. Both revelation and reason are good and perfect gifts, coming down from the Father of lights. Human reason, however, can only shine in the borrowed splendour of that bright luminary of the world of spirits, the natural type of which the fable allows to terminate the contention of the stars of heaven, as to pre-eminence and rank: "Sidera contendebant de principatu, sol oritur cessat omnis contentio!"

It has been observed on a former occasion, that divine revelation was given to educate man for most important purposes. Now, according to sound principles of education, the master brings a variety of subjects before the mind of his pupil; he mixes difficult and abstruse subjects moderately with those that are more simple, in order to foster in the youthful mind a desire for personal study and reflection. Whenever God gives to man a new revelation, it is always brought into connexion with something preceding. It either renders complete what has been already revealed; or it rectifies what has been misapprehended on the part of man; or it contains the germs of some future revelation. Whatever is new will be more unintelligible and mysterious than what has been

already brought forward. Man feels overpowered, and gives his reason into captivity; and it is revelation only which can solve the mysteries of godliness. As, however, the divine education is calculated not only for our earthly existence, but for the future ages of eternity, the final solution of problems is naturally put to a far greater distance.

Whatever is mysterious will not, however, necessarily remain mysterious for all ages. Although man does not comprehend it from the beginning, he may yet enter into its depths at some future period. As divine revelation is not the result of any philosophical speculation, in matters of religion, it may truly be said to pass all understanding. But we are to know more and more; we are to grow in knowledge until we know even as we are known.

It will, however, be sufficiently plain, from what has been said, that every new revelation, as part of the divine education, will always retain something of this mysterious character. Every fresh manifestation of divine truth emanates from the Most Holy of the temple of truth, which is never fully disclosed. If it were otherwise, revelation would cease to be a divine education. To educate a person for what he already is, or to teach him what he already knows, would be unreasonable, and is a thing without sense. If there be, and if there must needs be, a revelation, it will be rather an evidence of truth, and a criterion of its divine origin, than an argument against it, when

it can be shown to contain things which pass human understanding. And whosoever objects to these mysteries of revealed Religion, might as well be without it altogether; for divine revelation will necessarily retain this mysterious character.

The medium by which revelation reaches the heart of man, is his faith, and not his intellect. By confidence, or a certain kind of faith, commences the acquisition of all knowledge in the most common things of life. The whole effect of general instruction is entirely dependent upon the confidence of the pupil in his master. And should it surprise, when we find that in divine revelation a confidence of a far more exalted character should be necessary on account of the mysteries which it proclaims? There is a period in common life when the faculties of man are yet dawning, and there is also in Christian experience a time when faith and the elements of Christian knowledge are existing only in the germ.

Man believes what passes understanding, because it is revealed by GOD, and a higher authority for its truth cannot reasonably be expected. And as divine revelation has always accredited itself to human reason, it demands faith again from the latter in return. God revealed a mystery to the first man, and demanded faith; but as he sought to solve it, now by doubts and then by unbelief, this was his sin and his destruction. God revealed a mystery to Abraham, but Abraham believed God, and this was reckoned unto him for righteousness.

When man has by faith received divine revelation, and he discovers in it things of a mysterious character, he must either abandon his faith, and receive it as revelation no longer, or he must "cast down reason and everything that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." If he reject revelation in unbelief on account of its mysteries, he sinneth against his own reason, and elevates himself above God. If he submit to the obedience of faith, he would do nothing but acknowledge the finite and limited nature of his reasoning faculties; and in so doing, he would only accomplish what is due to God, and what he owes to himself as a dependent creature.

As nothing is more injurious in the common walks of literature and education, than the erroneous impression which causes an individual to imagine he knows what in reality he knows not, the mysterious character of divine revelation is always calculated to preserve a humble and docile frame of mind. Although the bringing into captivity of every thought, is founded upon the very nature of divine revelation, human reason is not subjected by an arbitrary or compulsory process, but it voluntarily embraces such "*captivity*," as the only method which can lead to the true *liberty*. It gladly acknowledges its finite character and gives glory to divine revelation.

There is nothing more favourable to the growth of knowledge and wisdom in divine things, than the exercise of our reasoning faculties in the service of

true and living faith. As the faculties of man expand under the influence of revelation, the mysterious character of revelation decreases. He first believes, and this is counted unto him for righteousness. In holding fast the divine character by faith, man preserves himself against an inveterate enemy, which so frequently suppresses Christian knowledge in its very first beginnings. And as divine revelation is far from being simply of a theoretical character, as it enters practically into the whole nature of man, not merely nor yet chiefly into his reasoning faculties, there is yet another medium by which to obtain Christian knowledge. The *experience* of the gracious effects of revelation constitutes a rich and never-failing source of all manner of knowledge in spiritual things. And thus by degrees one doctrine throws light upon another doctrine; the mystery becomes less mysterious; revelation is viewed as a whole, and even the uneducated and unscientific individual often gains a profound insight into the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven. He that putteth his trust in divine revelation by faith, shall never be confounded.

A living faith seems thus to be the parent of all sound and real knowledge in divine things. There must be of course something given by God, which is to be received and understood by man. No man can take anything of himself, except it be given him from heaven. Unbelief is blind, and cannot receive the things of God. But faith is never superseded by the

reasoning faculties of man; not even with those who obtain a more distinct and systematic knowledge of divine revelation. Faith never will cease till it be changed into sight; which will induce a new order of things. Faith cannot be superseded by Christian knowledge. Both have indeed the same object, but yet they are based upon different foundations in one respect.

The *faith* of the Christian believer is founded upon the historical facts of divine revelation, which are brought before us in the form of a divine testimony. The *knowledge* of divine things is based upon the experimental acquaintance with revelation, which is cultivated subsequently to that period in which man believed without seeing. Now, as the facts of revelation remain always the same, and are always true, the faith which is built upon it will likewise continue to be exercised in it. Thus faith will abide, whilst knowledge is increasing under its genial influence. It would be unnatural to suppose that the reception of an historical fact was discontinued, when being understood as to its cause, its origin, its import, and its effects. Faith will abide until it be changed into sight. Knowledge of divine things will be increased, and mysteries will be solved, until we shall no more know in part, nor prophesy in part; until that which is in part shall be done away, and we behold with an open face, and be changed from glory to glory.

9. When man first was created, he was "very good," and appeared at once as the end of the ways

and works of God. The glorious character of the Almighty was reflected in him, as it was reflected in no other sphere of creation. Christ was in all ages the bearer of divine revelation to man, as the image of the invisible God; and man was "the glory and image of God," (1 Cor. xi.) as far as he lived in Christ and Christ in him. This image was to be unfolded in his whole nature; hence Christ was called the first-born of many brethren. Whilst he appears in this character as the "Lord who is the Spirit," man on the other hand was to be led by the Spirit from glory to glory. God having given eternal life to mankind in Christ Jesus, and having adopted them as sons before the foundation of the world, it was part of the human destiny to receive, preserve, and unfold the image of God in his whole nature. Whatever portion, therefore, of mankind subsequently refused to receive life and knowledge through Christ, was cut off from eternal life, and doomed to everlasting perdition. Every soul, therefore, that feigns to possess power, energy, and faculties to produce life and to know the truth from its own resources, falls a prey to spiritual decay and death eternal.

Man was to multiply himself not in his own image, but in the likeness of his maker; and unfolding, as a good steward of the manifold grace of God, the divine likeness in the liberty of a son of God, he was to become a fellow-helper in the solution of the exceeding great problem of creation, by which a great and holy

family should be organized in Christ Jesus. Whilst God revealed to man for this purpose grace and truth, the hymn which filled the human breast, and resounded from every province of creation, was: "Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, and good-will towards man!" Upon the melancholy fall of man, the original faculty to discern and receive divine communications was reduced to a mere possibility of its being restored. According to Tertullian, the divine image *could* be darkened, as it was not God himself; but it *could not* be utterly extinguished, as it was something from God.

Divine revelation was, therefore, to appear no longer simply in the form of a communication to man; but it was to *reform*, to *restore*, and to *renew* man. Originally his pure faculties were simply *expanded;* now they were to be restored in order to comprehend spiritual things. The functions of the faculties of inspired men were by no means interrupted or obstructed when they received fresh revelations from God, but they were renovated by a miraculous influence of the Holy Ghost, and restored to their primitive state. The laws of the human nature are the same under a new aspect of things, and in a new sphere of life. The new ideas which are communicated to man, do not render human intellect superfluous. We might rather say, the reason of man only now assumes its primitive and healthy functions. We have, therefore, in very deed a *natural Religion* in a higher order of

things, and in a higher sense of the term, inasmuch as human intellect and reason, with its faculties, can only find in revelation their ultimate repose from an endless turmoil and solicitude. Man is only now in his peculiar element, having full scope for his mental, moral, and intellectual faculties. Revelation calls forth in man a new mode of life, new principles of reasoning, new methods of thought. If, according to the words of St. Paul, (1 Cor. x.) the Christian man already eats and drinks differently from one who is not a Christian, how much more may we expect that all his higher powers and energies should receive a new stimulus and a new tendency! Every revealed truth is strictly supernatural, but it becomes natural, as it were, by entering into the elements of humanity.

Revealed Religion again may be termed *Natural*, from the circumstance of its not being confined to that special revelation which is contained in the Bible. It comprises, from what we have seen on a former occasion, every religious truth which is to be recognised upon the broad face of nature. Before the will of God was expressed by the revelation of his word, he had already impressed his great name upon the visible creation of the universe. The earth, from her deep foundations, combines with the celestial orbs in declaring the glory of God. (Ps. xix.; Rom. i. ii.)

God's eternal power is known from the creation of his works. Every leaf, every herb, with the whole frame of the universe, has been created with a view

that from it the incense of praise should ascend. He created tongues to declare his goodness and his greatness. He created all things to bear the signatures of his Almighty power and might. It was a goodly saying of Athanasius when he declared: "As the great artist Phidias is recognised by the form and peculiar taste of his statues, so God is recognised in his great works." There is hence a figurative and typical character which is peculiar to the visible creation. In order to bring heavenly truths within the comprehension of man, the Holy Scriptures speak a language which has been greatly enriched from the imagery of the visible frame. The economy of the written revelation reflects in glorified and exalted features the character of the economy of creation.

The present world, with all its glory, riches, and forms of beauty, is a type only of that which is to come. And when ere long these feeble shadows and emblems of good things to come shall have passed away; when the present scene shall be folded up; when the veil that now hides from our view the great realities of the world to come,—when this veil shall be rent in twain from the top to the bottom, then shall we behold the full purport of genuine natural Religion, and comprehend the mysterious character of the world that now is, in connexion with that which is to come.

"Non propterea abjicienda est doctrina certa, et utilis vitæ, de multis rebus etiamsi multa ignoramus—preparamus etiam nos ad illam æternam Academiam,

in qua integram physicen discemus, *cum ideam mundi* nobis architectus ipse monstrabit." That divine revelation by nature and nature's works has ever been a sealed book to the Pagan world; and that, therefore, natural Religion in its *genuine* character has never been known to the Gentile world, is evident from the fact, that there is no acknowledgment of its merits beyond the Bible Religion. The natural Religion of the Pagans is of a thoroughly spurious and miserable character. It is only the Christian believer that will address his Maker with words like these:—"Thy creatures have been my books; but thy Scriptures much more. I have sought thee in courts, in fields, and gardens, but I have found thee in thy temples!" Never was there a Pagan astrologer who finished his works in the words with which a Christian astronomer of great celebrity concluded one of his books on the harmony of the worlds: "I thank thee, my God and my Creator, that thou hast delighted my soul by the works of thy creation. I have been enraptured in the contemplation of the works of thy hand. Thou increasest our desire for the light of thy grace by the consideration of the light of nature, that we might at last be transplanted into the light of thy glory!"

If there be truth in the assertion that the kingdom of grace and the kingdom of nature have but one and the same glorious head, it must be the bounden duty of Christian Theology and Natural Philosophy to take each other by the hand before the throne of Majesty;

to touch, as sisters, together the strings of the harp of praise, and to chant a joyful psalm to his great name. The intelligent Christian will always feel that taste may be combined with piety, and that the same heart may be occupied with all that is serious in the contemplation of Religion, and be at the same time alive to the charms and loveliness of nature.

Creation, however, with its eloquent tongues, could not sufficiently instruct mankind before the fall; much less could this be the case after that fearful catastrophe. The revelation in natural Religion is not only confined to the character of the "*divinity*" and "its eternal power," but the contemplation of creation made a different impression upon different individuals. Nature appeared to man exactly as man appeared to nature. The Pagan beheld his fallen and shattered image reflected in every thing around him; and, instead of being led from nature to nature's God, we invariably observe that it is the spirit of Paganism to deify the universe, both as a whole, and in its constituent parts. Nature, to him who despises revelation in Scripture is dumb. Nay, it is not dumb, it speaketh. But what does it speak? "We know that the whole creation *groaneth*." Not able to help itself, nor yet to help man in his search for happiness, the creation, with earnest expectation, "waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God!" The unbeliever is banished from his Maker's presence, and placed in some darksome corner of the world, without knowing who has

placed him there, or for what purpose he was created. He discovers too much to doubt, and too little to believe the wisdom and the goodness of the great God of nature. "Surely vain are all men by nature, who are ignorant of God, and could not out of the good things that are seen, know him that is: neither by considering the works did they acknowledge the workmaster. But deemed either fire, or wind, or the swift air, or the circle of the stars, or the violent water, or the lights of heaven to be the gods which govern the world. With whose beauty they being delighted took them to be gods. Let them know how much better the Lord of them is, for the first author of beauty created them." (Wisdom, xiii. 1—3.) To such people there are, therefore, no longer sermons in stones, no books in trees, no tongues in running brooks. But the intellect, which has been enlightened, purified, and restored, will receive truth, whether found in the words or in the works of the Almighty.

"Concludiamur igitur Theologiam sacram ex verba et oraculis Dei, non ex lumine naturæ dictamini haurire debere. Scriptum est enim: Cœli enarrant *gloriam* Dei; aut nusquam scriptum invenitur: Cœli enarrant *voluntatem* Dei."

The above view of the subject is in perfect accordance with the scriptural use of the terms, "Revelation," and "Manifestation." Revelation always implies an unveiling and disclosing of *hidden things*, which were strictly undiscoverable to man. And it is a remark-

able fact, that the term Revelation has never been applied, in Scripture, to those testimonies which God has given of his existence and his character through the means of reason, conscience, creation, and providence. Hence, the term *Revelation* is, strictly speaking, inapplicable to the Pagan world. God has *revealed* his counsels to Prophets and Apostles; but he is said to have *manifested* certain things to the Gentiles. (Rom. i.) He is declared not to have left himself without witness. (Acts xiv.) And when Christ is set forth as the Mediator of all spiritual blessings to mankind, as well as of every rational intelligence which is diffused throughout the world, it is distinctly said that he "*lighteneth every man that cometh into the world.*" (John i.)

Revelation, in its preparatory stages, always produces a salutary change in man; and it has, without exception, a healing effect upon his nature. Manifestation, to the Heathen world, is of an indefinite and more general character. If "*manifestation*" is used in the development of genuine Religion, it always follows "*revelation*" as a further illustration of what has been already revealed. Thus, for instance, in the New Testament, God is *manifested* in the flesh, whilst the truth of this incarnation has been already *revealed* in the Old Testament. The Christian converts from the *Jews* had *revelation* in the *Old*, and *manifestation* in the *New* Testament. The *Gentile* believers, on the contrary, had *revelation* in the *Gospel* and *mani-*

festation in the *Old Testament;* because they became acquainted, in the first instance, with the Gospel, and through the Gospel, with the Law and the Prophets.

Hence, St. Paul, in writing to the Gentile Churches, significantly declares, that the mystery was revealed to them by his Gospel ministry, and that the Manifestation of the same followed in the Scriptures of the Prophets. (Rom. xvi.) And St. Peter, in writing to Jewish converts, supposes the Revelation to have taken place in the typical constitution, but the Manifestation only in these last days of the Gospel dispensation. (1 Pet. i.) Hence, also, St. Paul, in writing to the Ephesian Church, as having once been aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the Covenants of Promise, declares, that, in being brought nigh by the blood of Christ, they were first built upon the foundation of the *Apostles*, and then upon that of the *Prophets*, through the Apostles, Jesus Christ himself being the chief Corner-stone. (Eph. ii.)

CHAPTER II.

GENERAL VIEW OF THE FUNDAMENTAL ERRORS IN RELIGION; AND THE STANDARD OF TRUTH IN RELIGIOUS MATTERS.

1. EVERY thing good and excellent will be imitated by something erroneous and spurious; and this error, "*like the shadow, proves the substance true.*"

True Religion has been placed above the contaminating influence of human depravity; but being directly opposed to the latter, it produces spurious semblances. True Religion cannot be corrupted; and when we speak of errors in Religion, we can only mean to speak of a degeneracy in the religious development, or a departure from true Religion. Now, degeneracy in Religion always emanates from what is feeble, sensitive, and voluptuous in the nature of man. Religious errors are at all times entrenched in the corruption and fortified by the weakness of human nature; hence the prevalence of religious error upon earth in every form and shape.

There are, however, two forms of religious error to which all others may be reduced; and these funda-

mental errors are, *unbelief* and *superstition*. These are diametrically opposed to each other; yet, strange as it may appear, we not unfrequently observe a sudden transition from the one extreme to the other. We have witnessed striking examples in Christian countries of sudden transitions from the worship of images to the denial of a God. And in Pagan lands we have instances in which the vilest species of idolatry has been quickly exchanged for atheistical sentiments. We have also instances of infidels being frequently terrified by natural phenomena, and of their speaking in a most superstitious strain. The highly-polished Pliny may be mentioned as an instance. Augustus wore charms on his body against thunder and lightning; and he was terrified when he discovered that he put the first shoe on his left foot instead of on the right! Even Napoleon has been charged with superstition.

This seemingly problematical occurrence is, however, easily explained, from the working of certain laws and principles which are peculiar to the human nature. It is upon a mathematical principle that the balance, after having been drawn down upon one side, will immediately afterwards descend almost as far on the other side, instead of resting at the point of equilibrium; and it is a psychological principle upon which man in quick succession will embrace the opposite extremes of a foul superstition and an impious infidelity.

Unbelief, properly speaking, can only exist where divine truth has been brought before the mind. The

believer is made a partaker of Christ, in holding fast his confidence steadfast from the beginning unto the end; but an *evil heart of unbelief departs* from the living God. For how shall they call upon him in whom they have not believed; and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? The Pagan world, accordingly, could not strictly be said to be labouring under unbelief. But, as it is represented by Scripture to have known God before it went a-whoring after other gods, Paganism also stands guilty of unbelief. They are without excuse. But unbelief, strictly speaking, is a wilful disobedience to the message of the Gospel. It receives not the love of truth that it might be saved, or it holds truth in unrighteousness. The word not being mixed with faith in them that hear it, the unbelieving heart becomes hardened under the deceitfulness of sin, and prepared to believe a lie.

As "*by faith we understand*" the things of God, unbelief, on the other hand, begets ignorance, and produces a *foolish* heart, a darkened understanding, and a reason which is bewildered by the vain imaginations which emanate from a vain mind. God sends to unbelievers strong delusions, that they should believe a lie.

Atheism, or unbelief, in its matured form, is a term which has been applied to various kinds of religious errors. The barbarian who was without religious rites, and citizens who had abandoned the established

Religion, were Atheists in the eyes of the Greeks and the Romans. Pagans in general are called Atheists by St. Paul in the original. (Eph. ii. 12.) An idol temple was termed a house of Atheism by the Grecian Jews. A man who had heterodox views respecting the Trinity was likewise styled an Atheist, in the language of the primitive Church. Holy Scripture knows nothing of Atheism in the absolute sense of the term. Nor does the moral nature or constitution of man admit of pure Atheism, which implies a virtual annihilation of his moral character. Man can as little exist without believing in the existence of God, as he can without thought. The very *blasphemies* of Atheists are the strongest evidence that they are not genuine Atheists; "because that which may be known of God is *manifest to them, for God hath showed it unto them.*" Holy Scripture, therefore, knows of no Atheism, but generally speaks of the fool who "SAITH in his heart, There is no God."

Plutarch declares, in one of his books: "The most important of all laws are those which have reference to the gods. Lycurgus, Numa, and Deucalion have, therefore, taught them to their several nations, in giving precepts respecting prayers, oaths, oracles, and feelings of hope and of fear. Yea, if you walk through the earth, you may find human abodes without walls, people without king, without houses, without coin, without theatres and learned schools, but you will never meet a town *without God, without*

prayer, without oracles, and without sacrifices! A town may rather exist without foundation, than that a state should exist without faith in the gods. This is the bond of union in society, and the support of all legislation." Theophilus of Antioch argued with an atheistical Pagan: "Thou canst not speak without testifying of God; thy very breath bears witness to his existence."

We shall hint at a few of the causes which favour the rise and accelerate the growth of this monstrous error.

In the first instance, as we grow older we observe that more advanced experience has proved fatal to many sentiments which we held in our past lives, and this may tend to make us doubtful of those opinions which we now entertain. Moreover, the history of the sentiments of wise and intelligent people being so full of conflicting opinions and opposite notions, might give us occasion to doubt the truth of everything. Again; the fact that so many things are shrouded in a veil of the profoundest mystery, so as to defy, as presumptuous, the efforts of the keenest intellect, may foster a spirit of scepticism in the human breast. Lastly; a desire for evidence of a different kind from what can be expected, is another cause of infidel sentiments. It is folly to demand mathematical proof in order to support the character of historical facts, or to expect moral evidence where mathematical proof can alone be available. We cannot measure the degrees of heat

by the yard, nor ascertain the strength of moral evidence by the inch.

We have already alluded to another prolific source from which infidelity has derived the most powerful and constant support; and that is, a secret or open inclination of the human heart to doubt the certainty of truths which have become disagreeable and obnoxious. Scepticism may do good in consuming the putrid mass of superstition, but it will proceed to attack also the sound parts of divine truth. Scepticism will do the work, in this respect, which is ascribed by a French author to a *spurious* Philosophy: "Philosophie refute d'abord les erreurs; mais si on ne l'arrête point là, elle attaque les vérités; et quand on la laisse faire à sa fantaisie, elle va si loin, qu'elle ne sait plus, où elle est, ni ne trouve plus où s'asseoir."

If it be the determined wish of a man to rid himself of certain revealed truths, which militate against his besetting sins, he will be led to remove them one after the other. Having paved his way by a thousand metaphysical "perhapses," as to the credibility of the documents of revealed Religion, the Gospel will gradually appear to him what he wished it to be; and the Christian has been converted to a Deistical creed. But even Deism will not stand the ordeal of the sceptical mind. The essential attributes of the metaphysical deity become involved in the dark mist which evaporates from a sceptical mind. Having dragged his existence through a succession of self-created

inconsistencies, problems, improbabilities, and impossibilities, the poor victim will eventually awake, as if from a terrible dream, and in looking up he will find himself *without God in this world!* The sceptic has become an infidel; and the infidel has become an atheist, in the modified sense of the term.

These unhappy victims of atheism forget, at the commencement of their career, that the certainty of some things cannot be made doubtful because of the uncertainty of others; that unsearchable things cannot deprive things which can be searched into of their truth and reality; that the impossibility of the eye seeing *all* things does not prevent it from seeing *many* things; that though human thought cannot fathom things in themselves unfathomable, it can yet dive into others. Human reason can see some things, but, being short-sighted and finite, it cannot see all things. We can recognise everything which falls within our own horizon, but what is beyond we cannot see. And whilst a faithful and humble improvement of our limited powers is rewarded with increased powers and improved faculties, the hiding of the talent is attended by irreparable loss. The incontrovertible fact, that we must not depart from holding what is known, because there exist things which are unknown,—this fact must be apparently controverted to allow of the sceptical mind becoming atheistical.

Doubts must first be made plausible and reasonable, before the unhappy victim can resolve upon removing

certain hateful truths which are against him. Before a man can fall into the grievous error of scepticism, he must forget that human nature is not made to speculate without end and without measure; that there is a darkness of reason as there is one of the bodily eye; that it is no less ridiculous in wise men to demand an explanation of every mystery in nature and in Religion, than it is in children to doubt a parent's word because the truth of it cannot be demonstrated to their little minds. Whosoever speculates without measure, abuses his reason; and reason will revenge itself. As soon as reason is stretched beyond its *non plus ultra*, it will be involved in a labyrinth of doubt and scepticism. When forced to see too much, it will become blind, and lose all its powers of vision.

Man being once struck with "*blindness of heart*," can discern no longer the things of the Spirit. Atheism, it must be remembered, is no system of Religion; but an utter negation of all truth: hence it cannot lay claim to consistency. It leads into the ditch, without offering a means by which to extricate oneself again. It breaks down, without building a system of its own. Like ill-disposed children, the followers of this atheistical creed take pleasure in destruction. They are throwing down as fast as they can, but they never think of building up something better instead.

It is, however, not to be expected that the human mind will abide under this atheistical tyranny. Conscience will resume its authority; nature will assert

her right; reason will be abandoned, and the victim of infidelity and scepticism succumb to the blindest and most irrational superstition.

From superstition and unbelief we have, again, errors of Religion which are of a compound nature. As *superstition*, in the mouth of Pagans, has been misapplied and made to designate the Christian Religion, so has *mysticism* been considered by some as descriptive of the most essential part of Christian experience. We observed in the history of true Religion, that the whole being of man was brought harmoniously under the influence of divine revelation. His intellect, his feelings, and his will, are drawn out in perfect harmony, and brought under its salutary influence. Religious errors, on the other hand, can only result when any one of the several faculties of man is wrought upon without due reference to the whole constitution of our nature.

When the influence of Religion is confined to the feelings and the imaginative powers of man, the fervour of his imagination will erroneously be imputed to divine inspiration, and the fanciful emotions of a heated brain ascribed to revelations from heaven. This is the character of mysticism! These private tuitions are then extolled above revelation, and revelation, in the spirit of genuine infidelity, is merely subservient to the contemplative powers of man. Thus mysticism will be more conformed either to superstition or to infidelity, in proportion as the fervent heat of super-

stition, or the coldness of atheistical principles, have the predominating influence. As superstition produced much evil, and caused serious desolation in the Church of God; so also mysticism, as the indigenous plant of Pagan soil, has at all times nourished a number of fanatical sects in her bosom.

A devoted Christian may, however, be termed mystical, simply because he sees and enjoys what others neither can see nor enjoy; whilst a mystical person imagines himself to see and to possess what he neither sees nor possesses. Physical powers and illuminations are often confounded with divine inspiration. There is, indeed, according to St. John, an internal anointing, which makes the teachings of false ministers superfluous, but not the ministry of the word in general; for "how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard, and how shall they hear without a preacher?" (1 John ii.; Rom. x.) Every Christian, indeed, is "*taught of God*," but this teaching of the Father involves our *obedience* when he draws us to the Son. (John vi. 44, 45.) We have a light within us; but it is a light only in the sense in which the eye is called the light of the body. Both are dark, not luminous bodies in themselves; and it is only when the "true light" shineth upon the soul, that the whole man becomes full of "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." As an efficient remedy against the mystical error which luxuriates in fantastical feelings and

quietistical contemplations, the Christian believer is encouraged to give all *diligence* to add to his faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience, and to patience godliness, and to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness charity; and in so doing he will neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. (2 Pet. i. 1—8.)

Superstition gives credit to the most incredible and unreasonable things. Infidelity withholds its assent from the most authenticated facts. The Christian believer embraces truth as it comes forth triumphantly from the scrutiny of every sober investigation. Superstition beholds things where nothing is to be seen; Infidelity shuts its eyes to the great light which shineth in darkness; the Christian believer adores that God who is "light, and in him is no darkness at all." Superstition gives heed to every fable, as if it were the oracle of God; Infidelity discovers impositions in the most genuine history; the Christian believer receives every unadulterated account of what God hath wrought, as it ought to be received. Superstition in its marvellous credulity listens to every talker; Infidelity will discover a deceiver in every honest witness; the Christian believer suspects nothing amiss where divine truth is set plainly before his eyes. Whilst superstition will always appeal to feelings which are devoid of every species of evidence; Infidelity is full of improbabilities, impossibilities, and absurdities; but

the Christian believer reposes all his confidence upon the historical facts of divine revelation. Superstition produces careless, childish, and feeble minds; Infidelity perverts, hardens, and puffs up the hearts of its victims; but true Religion cherishes, at all times, honest and truth-loving dispositions in man. Superstition denies reason to have any right to interfere in religious matters; Infidelity ascribes to human reason an authority which it could never be meant to have; but the Christian believer ascribes to those faculties that measure of strength and infirmity which they really have. Superstition cleaves to the dead form with a pertinacious grasp; Infidelity strives to be independent of both the spirit and the letter; true Religion fosters a profound deference for the spirit, and on account of the spirit, also for the letter. Superstition mistakes the mechanical part of religious exercises for devotion; Infidelity ridicules both external signs and internal feelings of devotion as fanatical and fantastical; the spirit of true Religion cultivates both in that due proportion which alone can make them beneficial. Superstition enslaves men by deadening formalities; Infidelity breeds a generation of scoffers; true Religion produces people of practical piety and virtue. Superstition produces Pharisees, who in straining at the gnat, and making long prayers, swallow camels, and eat the widows' houses; Infidelity hatches Herods, who reward dancing maidens with the heads of the preachers of righteous-

ness; true and undefiled Religion produces souls without guile, like Nathanael; who love the truth above all things; men like John, who love the brethren above all things; and people like Paul, who love the kingdom of heaven above all things. Superstition exposes men to the terrors of conscience; Infidelity rewards them with a blindness which loves darkness rather than light; true Religion imparts abundance of peace, and prepares them for the joys of the world which is to come. Thus we see that, whilst superstition produces unbelief, and infidelity genders superstition, true Religion teaches man to avoid these extravagant errors, which like a pestilence walk in darkness.

2. In order to discriminate between religious truth and religious error, it will be necessary to fix upon a standard of truth in religious matters.

We, as Christian men, acknowledge the Bible, and maintain that it is the sole and infallible standard by which every religious sentiment must be measured. But to refer our opponents at all times to the fact, that such and such things are written in the Bible, previously to their having been convinced that it is true because it is in the Bible, and that it is in the Bible because it is true, may indeed seem a strange method of supporting an argument of so important a character; and our opponents might answer us in their turn by declaring, that such and such things must also be true, because they are plainly written in *their* sacred books!

When we refer to the Apostolic usage respecting the subject before us, we invariably observe that a broad distinction was drawn between those that knew and acknowledged the Scriptures of the Old Testament, and those who received the Gospel before they were acquainted with the Scriptures of the Old Testament. Hence, for instance, we have infinitely more quotations in the Gospel by St. Matthew and the Epistle to the Hebrews, which were both addressed to Jews, than in the Gospel according to St. Luke and the Epistle to the Ephesians, which were primarily and chiefly written to Gentiles.

It will, therefore, be requisite to agree upon a test by which religious systems may be examined *apparently* without reference to the documents of the Holy Scriptures; a test, at the same time, which can be applied to the satisfaction of all parties.

We have already shown that there is but one Religion; and that only the Christian Religion has a claim to be a revelation from heaven. The Christian knows, believes, and confesses that his Religion alone embodies the true and infallible rule by which all others must be examined. But will it appear in the same light to those who are not Christians? The question is of a religious nature; and the Religions of different individuals may be as different as light from darkness. The individuals concerned may be members of different branches of the human family, speaking different languages,

breathing a different atmosphere, dwelling in different climates; they may have contracted different habits of living, acting, and thinking; they may have imbibed different prejudices in the very earliest stages of their existence. These prejudices may have been nourished in childhood by marvellous tales, as well as by constantly recurring ceremonies which are interwoven with their very existence. The different individuals, again, may have received different impressions from different objects. Their birth, their training, and their education, in all probability, has given a different stamp to their every feeling and thought. They may possibly have grown up under the influence of a greater or smaller amount of superstition and prejudice; and all of them may be more or less the creatures of fashion, climate, or society.

It is natural to take up the Religion of our fathers; as natural as it is to take up their habits and their language. Early prejudices, as well as early impressions of truth, will always leave a tincture upon the mind which will seldom be obliterated without much pain and ingenuity. Each religious community will naturally defend its own views, and argue with all possible fervour and zeal to support the Religion of its ancestors. Each party will urge the sanctity which a hoar antiquity has bestowed upon its religious tenets, which are looked upon as a sacred trust from their progenitors. Each community will appeal to a cloud of witnesses, by which it is or fancies

itself to be surrounded. Each will bring forward the real or imaginary miracles and mighty deeds by which, in bygone days, the pecular doctrines it advocates profess to have been established. Each party will point out heroic minds, hosts of saints, and a goodly number of martyrs. Each will boast of certain illustrious characters who have supported their creed with shining talent. Each party will most naturally quote passage after passage from their sacred scriptures, and all will enlarge upon the nations and kindreds who have lived in the belief, and died with the impression, that theirs was the true Religion.

All these difficulties are calculated to becloud our minds with prejudices of no ordinary description. We are about to view the position of certain stars in the horizon of Religion; and these our prejudices, as it were, imperceptibly dislocate the tube of our telescope. Each party will look through its own glass, and find what it wishes to discover. Each will be tempted to set up its own views as the standard of truth. Each will commit the very natural mistake of the unsophisticated and over-fond mother, who considers all the little ones in the world to be far inferior to her own child. It is, moreover, melancholy to observe, how an earnest desire to see one's own opinion established upon the ruins of all others, invariably deprives man of an honest wish to discover truth, and of a willing mind to embrace the same. Man is naturally prone to overlook his own defects,

and to place the deficiencies of what concerns his own person more and more into the shade. The shadows grow daily longer, broader, deeper, and darker; and by degrees they darken the whole region, that we can see nothing but perfection within and about us.

This may especially be said to be the case in religious matters. Our mind becomes warped; and we gradually feel inclined only towards what is pleasant, and not towards what is good, and true, and excellent. Thus when our interest would seem to demand that we should discover a Religion to be false and defective, we are so predisposed to wish it to be false, that before long we gain sufficient courage to believe it so. We have a double-sight, and see erroneously, because it is our wish and interest to take an erroneous view of the case. Obstinate disobedience to the truth of God gradually fosters an inveterate hatred against it. The heart will become hardened, and the characteristics of a hardened heart are exemplified. (Acts vii. 54—57.) It gnashes with the teeth where it should give an answer, but cannot "answer one to a thousand." It stops the ears, and is determined not to hear, where it ought to listen with all humility and meekness of spirit. It raises a cry of blasphemy, where it ought to keep silence. It condemns, when it ought to adore and worship, but will not. Finally; a hardened heart will without remorse "*stone*" the truth, because it loves darkness rather than light.

3. It is very clear that the standard of truth cannot be found in the *universal prevalence* of a certain Religion; inasmuch as Paganism was the *Catholic Religion* of the world before the Christian era. Again, it cannot be found in the multiplicity or the imposing character of the ritual observances of certain systems of Religion; nor yet in the austere and rigid nature of their religious discipline. In both these points avowedly false systems of Religion have eminently distinguished themselves. If universality were to afford the standard, we should be sadly deceived. If the exploits of the followers of certain creeds were to be a sign of their truth, who would venture to doubt the truth of the Religion of Alexander the Great, or of Cyrus, or of Julius Cæsar? And yet, having perished from the earth, they must have been necessarily false. If, again, the austere and self-denying lives of certain parties be a demonstration of the truth of their Religion, who would venture to doubt the divine character of the Religion of Diogonus Cynicus, and of the Gymnosophists and Brahmins?

Again; although prosperity and wealth be the general effect of genuine Religion, yet we have seen degraded idolators to lord it over distressed worshippers of the true God, whilst "the wicked rejoiced in their prosperity." And the Jewish nation, as the depository of true Religion, has been defeated successively by the Chaldæans, Assyrians, Egyptians, and Romans.

Again; that the standard of truth cannot be *general*

consent, is sufficiently evident from the history of fashion, both in the world of politics, of literature, and of Religion. One thing is superseded by the other; and yet all in their turn have the applause and the general consent of the multitude. "*Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! For so did their fathers to the* FALSE *prophets.*" (Luke vi. 26.) Nor was general consent highly esteemed among the Pythagoreans; for it was their motto: "*Go not upon the public roads.*" The judgment of the multitude cannot be true or just because it is the opinion of the mass of the people, nor yet is it necessarily false because it is so. It is weakness to believe a thing to be true, because many believe it to be so; and it is equal weakness to consider a thing to be false, because most people believe it to be true. What a majority of people consider to be true, ought to be fairly examined before we give our assent to it; the opinion, on the other hand, of an individual who says *nay*, because all others say *nay*, deserves no examination. To contradict, and refuse to believe a doctrine because it is generally believed, is to sin against reason, and to commit a heinous crime against the truth. But it is our duty to give our assent to things which are commonly believed, after we have satisfied our minds by an honest examination as to their truth.

Again; neither the *novelty* nor the *antiquity* of a creed can afford a standard of truth in religious

matters. The antiquity of a Religion exerts a most powerful spell over the human mind; and there can be no doubt that true Religion must have antiquity in its favour. But it cannot form a criterion of truth. We may love and admire antiquity, because we feel the powerful claims which it has upon our regard and veneration. But frequently we love what is old, because it is convenient for us to act, and to think, and to believe as we have always been accustomed to act, and to think, and to believe from our youth. We too often admire what is old, because it is admired by others. Antiquity, therefore, can be no criterion of truth; nor can it furnish a sufficient reason either for giving or withholding our consent. Antiquity can as little form a standard of truth now, as it could have been a criterion of truth at any previous period. What *now* is old and appears venerable on account of its antiquity, must needs have been *new at one time*. And, again, what now is young or new, will have waxen old before long, be it false or true. The fact, therefore, that a certain Religion is of an ancient date, can have no other influence upon us beyond encouraging us to examine the character of its claims. If we declare a Religion to be true, only *because it is old*, it will follow that we should be prepared to admit Hindooism, or any other Religion, to be true, if it can be proved to be of equal antiquity.

Again; the *novelty* of a thing is no argument *à priori* against its truth. Our own experience cannot lead us

to look with contempt upon every thing that is novel. The most forcible argument against such an error would be the fact, that all opinions, arts, sciences, and truisms, which are now reverenced as old, have each been new and novel in their season. How uncomfortably, for instance, the present generation would be situated if every new invention was repudiated, just because it bore the character of novelty! New discoveries, new ideas, which did not happen to be already in our favourite system, would be to us like odoriferous bodies to a man who is utterly devoid of olfactory nerves.

Novelty, however, much less than antiquity, can furnish an authoritative standard of religious truth. True Religion, indeed, will be ever fresh, ever new, and flourishing; it will always unfold new life and propagate renewed health. But absolutely new systems of Religion were not even found improvements in the natural history of spurious Religion. Nor can it be said that an unqualified tendency to novelty leads to beneficial results in matters of science. There is indeed a tendency to new discoveries in matters of science, and we are never satisfied with the knowledge which we have already acquired. But to ascribe value to a novelty *because* it is new, is a great weakness, and will lead to grievous errors in judgment and in practice. In matters of Religion, new systems have invariably proved new falsehoods. The author of some new system of belief may indeed commiserate

former generations for not having been benefited by the lamp of his kindling, but he generally proves a new deceiver; and whilst he himself, in all probability, has buried some old system, he yet fancies that his new Religion shall be immortal. An old system of Religion may be true, but it may also happen to be false. An old Religion must be examined, lest we embrace ancient errors. If an old Religion be true, it is not true because it is old. Whatever is new must be examined, lest we reject some new truth, or embrace some new error. The novelty or antiquity of a thing cannot change its quality.

Again; the desirable standard of religious truth cannot be established from human reason. We indeed find that man is prompted, under certain circumstances, to take the same view of things; but then we have already seen that we have in human reason a most fallible guide as regards matters of Religion. Yea, still more, we discovered that even in scientific matters it becomes the victim of inconceivable folly. In addition to what has been said with reference to the sciences of the Hindoos, we observe that a philosopher of our own day proved scientifically, to his own satisfaction and that of his admirers, that it was absurd to believe that steam-ships could ever cross the Atlantic; yet, in a few years afterwards, he crossed that ocean in a steam vessel himself! If human reason prove such a poor guide in things natural, much more does it show its weakness and presumption when it attempts to find

out the Almighty to perfection, and dogmatically to assert what should serve as a standard of truth in religious matters. And then we should always be at a loss where to find this perfection of reason. We must either refer to our own opinion, or appeal to some great man who contains this standard of truth, according to the best of our judgment. There would be a never-ending revolution in an eternal circle. The Mahommedan will go to his prophet, the Hindoo to his Avatars and Rishis; the Buddhist will appeal to his Buddhas, and the Parsee to Zoroaster. As, however, the best and most able of men know not the things of the Spirit, we shall not find our standard in this way.

We have seen that religious truth cannot be invented by human faculties, nor can the criterion of religious truth be obtained from that doubtful source. It can be obtained only where God hath deposited the same. And here it may be observed, that it may be a matter of indifference to our opponents from whence we derive our criterion of truth, provided the standard we propose be such as to command their unqualified assent. As natural Religion has been considered by some writers to be so called, not because it was discovered by the unassisted natural powers of man, but because, when once made known, it was exactly the Religion of which human reason must approve; so we now demand a standard of which our faculties must approve, although they cannot discover it without

being revealed. We cannot, therefore, recognise this criterion in the enjoyment of certain advantages, such as worldly prosperity; nor yet in the respective Scriptural authorities, which are alleged by the several parties to be inspired; nor can we recognise it in the universality, antiquity, or novelty of a Religion. It can neither be general consent, nor can we hope to find it in the natural powers of human reason. All these things are separately, or collectively, incapable of forming a standard of truth in religious matters.

Again; it is the bounden duty of every Christian believer to hold fast the doctrine of the blessed Gospel; also to contend earnestly, if requisite, for the faith which was once delivered to the saints; and to be ready always to give a reason of the hope that is within us, with meekness and fear. Christianity, as the standard Religion, from the commencement of her career, met her adversaries, but demanded no favour; she has always given quarter, but taken none. Conscious of her divine integrity, she stepped forth amidst her friends and her foes, challenging them to examine claims, which, if realized, must cause the overthrow of every other creed. According to one of her earliest champions, truth demands no favour in her cause, for she wonders not at her condition. She knows that she is a sojourner upon earth, that she must find enemies amongst strangers; and she has but one desire, not to be condemned unknown. There was no erudition, however deep and comprehensive; no hatred,

however great and deadly, from which either the documents or tenets of the Christian Religion had occasion to shrink; and how remarkably the records of past ages celebrate its praises and establish its divine character! Whenever it was apparently crucified and buried again with its adorable Author, it started with him again and again from the tomb, to confound and triumph over all its foes. Christianity is either true or false. Its truth has been demonstrated by a cloud of witnesses; and "if the witness of man be true, the witness of God is greater." Whatever changes and chances the defence of the Gospel has undergone in the lapse of ages, there has ever been one great and mighty evidence of the truth of the Christian Religion, an evidence always the same, and always fresh and eloquent. He that believeth the record which God gave of his Son, has set to his seal that God is true and every man a liar. Who, therefore, amongst an endless variety of religious systems, "*has the bride, he is the bridegroom!*"

But although the truth of the Christian Religion be thus established by the attestation of God and man, as it has ever been, we are, nevertheless, brought back to that syllogism within those secret chambers of the heart which are not accessible to public gaze: "*If any man will do the will of God, he shall know whether this doctrine be of God.*" The Gospel is "*the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.*" It will always be, not in enticing and persuasive words

of human wisdom, but in *the demonstration of the Spirit and of power*. It will always be the light of God shining into the *heart*, that must give the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Christ Jesus; and it will, therefore, ever be a leading feature in the evidences of Christianity: "*As it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken.*"

The heart is already, in a physiological point of view, older than the head; and we must, therefore, be the less surprised that also in religious matters it takes the precedence, and is that part in man which prescribes as the central power the whole of the motions and actings of the human spirit. To speak of the beauty of the Christian Religion to an unenlightened mind, is to talk of colours to the blind. But if it be received into the heart, the conviction of its truth will be co-instantaneous with its reception. The Christian believer may even look with composure upon the abstruse nature of certain points; for if only the paralytic experience the beneficial effect of the electrical powers, what can it matter to him whether Rollet or Franklin, or neither, be right as to the scientific definition of the thing. "Fides præcedit intellectum, neque vero intelligo, ut credam, sed credo ut intelligam." (Augustin.) The chief glory of true Religion being thus unknown and inaccessible to the world in general, and the chief evidence of true Religion being in truth like that new name, "*which no man knoweth, saving he that receiveth it,*" we shall

require a standard of a more tangible nature, which can be more generally discerned.

4. It has been sufficiently shown that man could not educe from his own faculties a criterion of what is truth in religious matters. Yet, although unable to create such a standard of excellence, man has the power to discern its general features when brought before his mind. There are in man certain principles which are peculiar to human nature. We observe certain moral and physical principles and dispositions, which are inseparable from it. These views and sentiments, of which the whole human race naturally partake, act that part in the moral world which the law of gravity is acting in the world of matter. They lay the foundation of that harmony in social intercourse, without which no bond of connexion would exist. There is an internal principle, which prompts man in his natural condition to make a difference between right and wrong, and produces the primary laws of veracity and justice, by which society is regulated. Now, as it is peculiar to the human mind to distinguish in some way or other between right and wrong, good and evil, so it is also peculiar to man to form a standard of excellency by which he adjusts things of the same kind. We have such a standard concerning the common things of life. We all have certain standards of beauty, of goodness, of justice, of riches and poverty, within our minds, which will naturally vary according to the extent of

our knowledge and acquaintance with the forms of beauty, and with the exhibition of goodness, justice, righteousness, riches and poverty, which we have witnessed, or with which we have otherwise become acquainted.

The human mind will act precisely upon the same principle when we have the religious world displayed before our eyes. Our standard of religious excellence will, no doubt, be according to our general knowledge of religious systems. We know, from the fact of there being conflicting systems of Religion, that most of them must be of a spurious character. If there are spurious systems of belief, there must needs be a genuine system of Religion; as there is no shadow without there being a substance. How far we shall be indebted to the character of true Religion, which must have existed amidst its spurious counterfeits, is immaterial to our present argument, and it is probable that we shall derive our whole standard of religious excellency from the same.

We shall demand of the standard Religion, in the first place, that it be *true in all its parts and bearings;* giving sufficient and satisfactory information respecting the nature, the attributes, the works, and the purposes of the Creator of the universe; particularly, also, respecting his will and pleasure regarding the reasonable portion of his creatures. Religion must, secondly, be *complete* to all intents and purposes; complete, more especially, as regards the origin, the present con-

dition, and the future destiny of mankind. As none of the mightiest intellects has ever succeeded in piercing the mysterious cloud in which the past, present, and future history of man is enveloped, we must expect it from true Religion. We expect, thirdly, that a Religion coming from God, and leading to God, should be *authenticated* by a body of evidences which will carry conviction to every heart, overthrow every reasonable objection, and remove every shadow of excuse. Religion, however, must not only be true respecting the Deity, complete respecting man, and certain respecting its evidences, but it must also be *practically adapted* to the moral and spiritual wants of mankind at large. We may conceive a Religion which affords all that we wish to know regarding Him, for whose pleasure we exist and were created. It may give us worthy thoughts of the character of God; it may rest upon the surest foundation as to its divine appointment; it may be true, complete, and certain on all these points, and still we may fancy the case of its not being practically that which we need. A Religion may be worthy to be received by beings of a brighter world, and adapted to their peculiar condition; but the question is, Does it suit our case? Does it bring to man a plan of salvation worthy of God, and adapted to his practical wants?

A true, complete, certain, and suitable Religion will serve as a standard or criterion of truth, by which all spurious forms of Religion must be tried and

examined. We shall now apply this test to the Christian system of religious belief, and if found applicable, no one will question our right to set it up as the standard of truth in religious matters.

5. As regards the first point, we find that the Christian Religion affords the most sublime, complete, and comprehensive representation of the character and the attributes of the Deity; of all his works, and ways, and counsels regarding his creatures. The revelation of the character of God, as we have it in the Bible, was evidently extremely desirable, and our expectations on this important point have not been disappointed; whilst there is a strange and sickening desolation in all Pagan systems of belief. These we have found to be utterly deficient in the most essential points. They have no clear ideas either of the unity, or of the spirituality, or of the holiness, or of the goodness and providence of the Supreme Being.

Again; the origin, the condition, and the high calling of man, are revealed only in the Christian Religion. The origin of his species was naturally a point which could only be known to man by immediate revelation. The absence of this revelation has produced those fabulous, absurd, and degrading ideas which are generally connected with the creation of man. Until information was given upon this point, Reason had no data from which to make her eductions; Philosophy was tormented with doubt and uncertainty; and History in this respect could only commence with a hypothesis

of a most arbitrary character. As regards the present condition of man, we likewise observe that Christianity alone throws sufficient light upon this dark subject. It delineates the character of man as we find it represented in history, and as it is experienced in ourselves, without reflecting moral imputation upon the character of the Deity. He is represented as having suffered a violent shock, by which he has gone very far from his original integrity. He is likewise represented as having drawn the whole creation after him, and brought it into an unnatural condition. Every other religious system, being without chart and compass, steers in the darkest uncertainty, and labours under the grossest ignorance on this important subject. Paganism is uncertain as to the original and present condition of man, and confused as to his future destiny, which involves the great and eternal emancipation of the whole creation from the bondage of sin, vanity, and corruption.

But the Christian Religion is supported by sufficient evidence as to its divine character. As it is true and complete, so also it is *authenticated* by such a body of evidences as will carry conviction to every unprejudiced mind. Revelation, unless repeated to every individual, must clearly be supported by the testimony of others. Now, as we cannot be present at the same time in all places, and cannot observe every thing in our own person, we are naturally guided by the testimony of others. There are in-

numerable things in which we are immediately interested, which have occurred at a great distance from us, and sometimes even in former ages. It must, therefore, have been the purpose of God in constituting us as he has done, that we should in reference to these things be assisted by the accounts of those who have been witnesses of the transactions. We must suppose the individuals in question to have been endowed with the same capacities with which we are endowed. The same objects which we should have seen, heard, handled, and examined, were seen, heard, handled, and examined by those who lived at the time, and were eye-witnesses of the circumstances which they have recorded. If the events were such as to make those persons feel interested in them, they in all probability acted as we should have acted, had we been in their position. We must yield to the same principle respecting moral and spiritual subjects. In religious matters we must act upon the same principle; indeed, if we had not this disposition of mind, we should be incapable of estimating the claims which Religion has upon our confidence, and of appreciating the evidences upon which it is founded. Now, if we inquire by what means God, with whom "nothing is impossible," has supported the character of revealed Religion, we find all that human faculties can comprehend and an enlightened mind can demand.

It is, indeed, not a mere logical process by which

its divine character is supported. For true Religion itself is far above the freezing atmosphere of so mechanical a mode of procedure, and its evidence is brought home to the heart of man by the demonstration of Spirit and power. It is approved of God among men at all times by miracles and wonders and signs. The Christian Religion is anointed with the power of the Holy Ghost; and it gathers the evidences of its truth by going about and doing good, and healing all that are oppressed with devils. Its evangelists and apostles go into all the world, and preach good tidings to every creature, because they cannot but speak the things which they have seen and heard. It cometh every where, not with outward observation and words only, but in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance. It demands every where that men should "*come and see*," and do the will of our heavenly Father, that they may know whether it be of God or of man. The experience and the acknowledgment of its truth necessarily synchronize; and men believe not so much on account of its circumstantial evidence as on account of personal experience. Having received it, all know for a certainty that it comes from God, and that God has sent it.

This mode of manifesting its efficacy is inseparable from its very character. Being strictly of a supernatural nature, which cannot be derived from anything already existing, it can only be known by

experience. It would cease to be what it really is, were it to permit any individual to sit in judgment upon its merits. Having been hidden, as the mystery of mysteries, from the eyes of man since the foundation of the world, it would have been inconsistent, upon its being revealed, that it should submit to the wretched and miserable criticisms of the speculative powers of that reason which had shown itself utterly incompetent to do anything in the sphere of religious truth.

In order to prepare man for the reception of this mighty evidence, Christianity not only demands a single eye to behold its glory, and the docility of babes to receive its instruction, but it awakens, strengthens, and restores every faculty in his nature. It does not, indeed, demand from man a blind submission, but its claims upon his heart are founded, first of all, upon its prophetical character, in which it searches the secrets of the hearts and lives of men, and prophesies truth into their consciences, telling them *all they "ever did."* The secrets of the heart are made manifest; and the Hindoo who is touched by the truth, will insist that St. Paul must have been a Hindoo himself to have been able to describe his character in the way he does. Not walking in dishonesty nor craftiness, true Religion commends itself to every man's *conscience in the sight of God*, by the manifestation of the truth. Whilst this character of true Religion leads the honest mind to see greater things than these, those that love

darkness rather than light are confirmed in their unbelief. He that is not with it will be against it. For unto judgment it was manifested in the world, that they which see not might see, and that they which imagine themselves to see, might be made blind. They do not understand the nature of true Religion, because, their deeds being evil, they cannot hear its testimony against them. Because it tells them the truth concerning all they ever did, they believe not! To such a people no other evidence of the truth of Christianity remaineth but the final judgment. (See John xii. 48.)

When the Spirit of wisdom and revelation is poured out into the heart of man, the eyes of his understanding are enlightened to appreciate the numerous evidences which are set forth in the person of Christ, in his body the Church, and in his word the Holy Scriptures.

The testimony of Christ, which he gives of himself, and which the Father gives of the Son, is, at the same time, a testimony to the truth of the Christian Religion, which is intelligible to every one that is of God; for he that is of God heareth his words. Christ doeth the works of the Father; and the works which the Father has given him to finish bear witness of the Son. The Father is in him, and he is in the Father; and he is so one with the Father, that he that believeth in the Son believeth in the Father.

The person of Christ was the *miracle of miracles;*

his word and his doctrine were miraculous; all his works and deeds were miraculous. His doctrine was miraculous; his works and miracles were doctrinal. All his words and deeds were so many reflections of that Godhead which was dwelling in him bodily. He was the fountain of all that is gracious, and great, and glorious, and wonderful, and powerful, and holy. Hence it was that his inspired disciples wrote of his person in that remarkable language: "*We beheld his glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.*" He "*manifested forth his glory, and his disciples believed on him.*" "*In him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.*" "We have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were *eye-witnesses of his majesty.*" And when they are about to portray the future happiness and to describe the ineffable bliss of his redeemed, they can find no terms more appropriate than such as these: "WE SHALL SEE HIM AS HE IS." They are "TO BE PRESENT WITH THE LORD;" they shall "BE WITH CHRIST!"

Verily, Christ and his Religion may well say: "*I receive not testimony from man.*" "He that believeth not is already condemned; because he hath not believed in the name of the only-begotten Son of God." "He that hath received his testimony, hath set to his seal that God is true." "He that believeth not the Son, shall not see life; but the wrath of God

abideth on him." These are the authoritative declarations of the Mouth of Truth.

Again; the Scriptures of the Old Testament testify of Christ, because the Prophets were searching into these things, the *Spirit of Christ being in them.* As Christ, therefore, testified of himself in the Old Testament as well as in the New, the Jews did not believe Moses, because they did not believe in Christ.

As the Prophets testified of Christ through his Spirit which was in them, (1 Pet. i. 10, 11,) so, again, the Apostles bear witness of Christ by the self-same Spirit. Their testimony is, again, not "*with wisdom of words,*" not "*with enticing words of man's wisdom,*" but "*in demonstration of the Spirit and of power,*" that man's faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. The weapons of their warfare are not carnal, but mighty, through God, to the pulling down of strongholds, casting down *reasonings* and every thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every *thought* to the obedience of Christ.

The testimony of the Apostles was always accompanied by that Spirit who searcheth the mind of the Lord, and the deep things of the Godhead.

We shall not enlarge upon the evidences of Christianity, and the testimonies which the Church has given of her adorable Head; but whosoever has such testimonies given unto him as were given to Christ, may indeed declare, with all authority and power,

"Whosoever believeth not, shall be condemned. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but these my words shall not pass away!"

6. The Christian Religion is, however, not only true in all its parts and bearings; it is not only complete to all intents and purposes; it is not only authenticated by a body of evidences, which carry conviction to every unprejudiced mind; but it is, lastly, also *practically adapted* to the moral and spiritual wants of mankind at large. We are not only theoretically informed of the Deity and his attributes, but we are made acquainted, at the same time, with the terms upon which he is willing to be our God. We are not only told what we were, and are, and must become, but the Christian Religion provides likewise all necessary means and ways by which to make this our calling and election sure. If we are to have a Religion, let it suit our case and answer its practical purpose. If we suppose the case, that the revelations of a Religion did not approve themselves to our nature, however much we might be persuaded of their speculative truth, they would be inapplicable to any purpose of practical utility. The Christian Religion is eminently, and above all others, a practical Religion. It appeals to our hopes and fears; it approves itself to our rational faculties; it bespeaks our love, engages our gratitude, and leaves untouched none of our affections.

It is the peculiarity of the Christian Religion, that

it appears to the inquiring mind under a variety of aspects. Like a diamond, which at each turn emits fresh lustre and exhibits another variety of hue and colour, so peculiarly striking in that gem, so each aspect of the pearl of great price is fraught with fresh glory and goodliness. It appears as wisdom to the foolish; it opens riches to the poor, abundant grace and free pardon to the sinner. It thus bears directly upon the several wants of mankind. And as at the beginning of the Christian era, one man was roused by mighty and miraculous events; another by the wonderful fulfilment of ancient prophecy; a third by the incomparable character of the Divine messenger; another, by the extraordinary nature of his Divine revelations; and again another by the soothing accents of the Gospel message; so this Religion has ever since been found to be remarkably adapted to every diversity of the human character. All, indeed, have to come, and see, and to taste the graciousness of the Deity; and there is ample occasion, in the variety of peculiarities and wants of men, to prompt their coming to Christ and to his gospel.

The restless driving about of Paganism in empty forms and unprofitable ceremonies, sufficiently shows that man was not altogether unconscious of his deplorable condition. It was, therefore, of the utmost practical importance that true Religion should not only propose a reasonable and satisfactory plan of salvation,

but actually administer all that was necessary to redeem the intellect, the mind, the affections of the whole man from their unhappy and forlorn condition.

Man being impressed with a deep sense of his guilt, we have the universal prevalence of atoning sacrifices; and a Religion without sacrifice would have been unsuited to a fallen and guilty race of men. We have not only a keeping alive of the remembrance of sin during the time of the Old Testament, but, (and this is the greatest charm of the Gospel,) the Lamb of God taketh away in the fulness of time the sins of the whole world.

Again; constituted as we are, it would seem that a Religion without some external positive institutions would not be suited even to the days in which we now live. We have found that true Religion was strictly adapted to the primitive days of mankind by its symbolical character. And if we should find in these latter days a Religion with some sacred obligatory and spiritualizing institutions, we must consider it a strong presumptive argument in favour of that Religion.

Now the rites of the Christian belief are not only simple, and free from all the vain pomp of imposing ceremonies; they are not only innocent and profitable ceremonies,—but they are *Divine sacraments*, in which an invisible, spiritual, supernatural grace is communicated through a visible sign.

Again; such a Religion only seems to be suited to our nature which would humble and impress us with

a deep sense of our weakness and guilt. All spurious systems of Religion fill the human heart with self-complacency and arrogance; sentiments which are directly calculated to destroy every principle of true piety and vital morality. Christianity alone imbues the heart of man with the principle of genuine humility. It is said of Apollonius Tyanæus, a Pythagorean philosopher, who was considered a pattern of perfection by his fellow-Pagans, that he was accustomed to conclude all his prayers, "*Give unto me, O ye gods, what I deserve!*" How different the conclusion of Christian prayers, when we generally hear words like these: "*Hear us, O God, through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ, thy Son, our Lord;*" or, "*We beseech thee to hear us, for the love of thy only Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ;*" or, "*Through Jesus Christ our Lord!*" How different the prayer of Apollonius: "Give unto me, O ye gods, what I deserve," if compared with that humble petition, "*Forgive us our trespasses!*" Again, what a fearful contrast is Apollonius to the publican, who when he appears in the house of prayer is ashamed to lift up his eyes to heaven, and exclaims, "*God be merciful unto me a sinner!*" How different, again, the sentiments of the native convert of the Malabar coast, who, in aiding the translation of 1 John, chap. iii. 1, was so struck with the magnitude of the idea, that he thought it too high, too bold, and too much, that we should be called the children of God; and proposed that he should render

the passage, "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be allowed to kiss the feet of the Father!"

We discover a further adaptation of true Religion to the wants of humanity in the blessed character of our adorable Redeemer, who is the very centre of the whole system. The Christian Religion alone furnishes a perfect model of what is pure, and good, and holy, represented in a historical person. It has always been a peculiar wish of the human mind to shape unto itself certain models of moral perfection. Hence, the creation of imaginary heroes in the Grecian and other mythologies, to whom they looked as examples, and for encouragement in their various pursuits. Yet even these fictitious persons were far from being free from human infirmities. Hence Plato still desired to behold an incarnation of virtue, because he was convinced that the example would act far more powerfully than all teaching and exhortation could accomplish. Philosophy in the following ages framed, it was thought, a model of perfection upon the principles of Stoicism, in which man was considered to excel even the Deity. Some there were, however, who looked for this image of moral perfection in real life. Amongst these was Seneca. "We must needs have a virtuous man," he says, "and always keep him before our eyes; so that we live, as it were, under his eyes, and look at him in all our actions. Our soul must have somebody for incessant contemplation, by which it may

improve its purity. Choose Cato, therefore, or, if he perhaps be too strict for you, make Lælius, a man of softer manners, a model of thy actions. In short, choose him whose words and actions please thee best. Always recollect his sentiments, and remember his conversation, and keep him before thee as guardian and example."

Now, Christ Jesus was born to this end, and for this cause he came into the world, that he by word and deed should bear witness unto the truth; and as the way, as the truth, and as the life, he has left us an example that we should follow his steps; and the admonition is to all: "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus." "I have given you an example," saith Christ, after every action of his life, "that ye should do as I have done." We are to be followers of God incarnate, as dear children. No common man can be, strictly speaking, a sufficient and authoritative example for other men: partly because all men are placed upon the same level before God, with whom there is no respect of persons; partly because all are labouring under sin and infirmities; and partly, also, in consequence of the peculiarity and the limited character of each common individual. As man is created to grow up in the likeness of his Maker, he can have no other example and model of action than God himself. (Eph. v. 1.) God was manifested in the flesh, to render visible the "express image of his person" to mortal eyes. This image of his person was Christ, who could say, "Philip, he that hath seen me, hath

seen the Father." As far as his mind is in us, we are again to become ensamples one to the other. (Phil. iii. 17; 1 Thess. i. 7; 1 Tim. iv. 12.) And as Christ was in all respects like unto us, sin only excepted, he was thus enabled to exercise that experimental sympathy, which he learned when tempted in all things like ourselves.

Again; not a national, but a universal Religion was suited to mankind. For, in order to benefit the whole race of man, it could not limit its blessings to any particular nation. Genuine Religion bore its national character no longer than was absolutely necessary; and it is the only system of Religion which bears this universal character; for even the Religion of Islam has only the appearance, but not the reality, of this universality. But what it could not have, partly on account of its dogma of predestination, partly on account of its ritual, it would substitute by a fanatical application of external force.

Again; we should expect that true and perfect Religion would particularly provide for the simple of the people, as they were so totally neglected by all other systems of Religion. When Socrates had once attempted to gain the heart of the Athenians by the popular mode of instruction, it was said in his praise, that he had brought wisdom from heaven, and introduced it into towns and houses. How much more can be said of the popularity of the Gospel Religion! Our blessed Lord, with all his wisdom, despised the art of rhetoric, and yet the people were astonished at his doctrine;

for his word was with power; "he taught them as one having authority, and not as the Scribes." At another time *all* bear him witness, and wonder at the gracious words which proceed out of his mouth. How well adapted were his incomparable Parables to instruct the simple, and to make them wise unto salvation! The mysteries of the kingdom were revealed by his ministry unto babes. When conversing near the well at Samaria, or preaching in the Temple, whilst the water was brought thither, he calls himself the *fountain of living waters;* when he heals the blind, he stands forth as the *light of the world;* when he is feeding miraculously a great multitude, he makes himself known as the *bread of life* which came down from heaven; when he raises the dead, he shows himself as the *resurrection and the life.* The Gospel, therefore, will ever be the stream in which the elephant may swim, and in which the feeble lambs are not in danger of being drowned.

Finally, to allude only to one more point, the history of true Religion, in its temporal effects upon the world at large, fully demonstrates how admirably it is suited to civilize and to ameliorate the human species. Whether it be true or false in its claims upon the universal belief of mankind, its salutary influence upon the life of man in all its phases has been admitted by its most determined adversaries. A highly gifted enemy of Christianity confessed in the last century, that if it be nothing but a human invention, it is certainly the

most suitable and beneficial by which the human race could have been deceived to their real benefit. Now, it is very clear that whatever leads to the advancement of human happiness must needs be consonant with and adapted to the whole constitution of our nature, and must harmonize with the great machinery of the universe in general.

The Christian Religion, being true, complete, certain, and adapted to our wants, it must be considered the standard of truth in religious matters.

7. The Christian Religion satisfies the deepest wants, and realizes the highest expectation. We have not in the gospel a mere experiment, an additional theory to redeem the world; but the way, the truth, and the life, are practically unfolded. The law and the gospel aim jointly to regenerate the world. We have indeed a form of doctrine, but every thing bears upon the life and the moral constitution of man, in contradistinction to every other creed. We have here no religious philosophy, no problem to be solved, no empty play of metaphysics. Were it left to human device to produce religious truth, the latter would naturally embody in its system the individual views of the party concerned in its production. Were man to be allowed to frame his own religious system, it would be as if to attempt to fetch life from the dead. To allow man to aid in any measure in the appointment of Religion, would be to administer fuel to the fire which it is intended to quench.

To avoid all these dangers, the gospel Religion appears in the character of a testimony which God hath given of his Son. By so doing, true Religion opens an altogether new view of God to mankind.

True Religion is made to rest upon the immutable basis of a *divine testimony!* It is brought within the horizon of man in the form of divine words and deeds; whilst the candour and openness with which it demands the honest investigation of man, is a presumptive argument strongly in its favour. It loves the light, and moves with an air of simplicity which we find in no other creed. All spurious systems of belief abide and love to abide in darkness.

But the fact that true Religion is offered to man as a *testimony* of something which God hath wrought, places it beyond the reach of man's egotism. True Religion infers the divine character of its doctrines from the divine character of the testimony. If Christianity had offered itself as a system of speculative doctrines, man could only have sought a standard in himself, and his judgment would have been beclouded by the reasonings of a depraved mind. Religion would unavoidably have received the stamp of fallen man; it would have been reduced to a spurious system of belief.

In order to avoid the predicament into which all spurious creeds have fallen, revealed Religion was founded upon the rock of a divine testimony, which is altogether independent of man; and, like every

other testimony of a given historical fact, it is placed above the obnoxious influence of man. The depraved passions of man may, indeed, becloud his view of the record which God has given of himself, but they can neither change the contents, nor yet alter the form of this testimony. Facts which are independent of us are always the same, and will always appear in the same light. What is false, is false; and what is true, will remain true, whether we consider it false or otherwise. What is true cannot be changed into false by our subjective belief. Man may obstinately shut his eyes to certain historical facts, but when he again opens them, he will find that they are still placed before him. Man may shut his ears to the divine testimony, but the testimony will still sound as loud as at any other period. Man may reject the witness in unbelief, but the testimony will ever remain the same. Nor can man for ever withhold his assent from what is true, any more than he can for any length of time believe to be true what is false in itself.

True Religion, therefore, assumed a position among men, which while it affords to every one full means of examination, yet preserves itself free from the contaminating influence of humanity. It thus avoids being thrown into the predicament in which spurious creeds are found. Man cannot mix his own ideas with the testimony of God, as he might have done if Religion had been offered in the form of a philosophy. Man cannot derogate from the merits or the

force of the divine testimony. This testimony is contained in the Bible; and this holy book may vindicate the divine character of the testimony, if necessary, in the same words with which Martin Luther defended his German Translation of the New Testament; saying, "I beseech all my friends and foes, my masters, printers, and readers, to allow this New Testament to be my own. If they find fault with it, let them make one of their own. I know well what I do; and I also see what others have done. But this Testament shall be Luther's New Testament in the German tongue; for there is no end and no measure in finding fault and passing censure."

Each individual is at liberty to receive or to refuse the divine testimony; but no one is authorized to abstract a Religion from miscellaneous sources, and then to give it the name of the Christian Religion.

This is the elevated position which true Religion by the appointment of divine wisdom has taken, in bringing before man divine Truth as an object of faith, and not so much as an object of knowledge. We do not deny that religious truth is as much an object of knowledge as it is of faith. But in order to obtain a living knowledge of this Truth, we must first yield to its regenerating influence, which is extended as much over the intellectual as any other of the human faculties.

Christian faith and Christian knowledge are inseparably connected one with the other. The method

of obtaining Christian knowledge is believing with the heart, (Rom. x. 10,) and understanding through faith, (Heb. xi. 3). By this method the above-mentioned rock is avoided. The believing with the heart precedes all intellectual demonstration, and forms the basis upon which a sound Christian knowledge is to arise. By faith man comes to receive the Divine testimony into his heart; the germs of Christian knowledge are developed with the growth of the Christian belief. Faith doth not commence where knowledge is at a loss, or where it is at an end; nor is faith superseded by knowledge; nor are both originally one and the same thing. But knowledge inheres and takes root in a living faith, and is gradually drawn forth into perfection. Faith, again, is neither merely contemplative, nor yet simply intellectual, but it receives and embraces what God hath wrought.

As regards, however, the certainty of the things which are thus believed, it is not less perfect than any derived from contemplation. It gives, on the contrary, scope to all true knowledge, and tone to all sound contemplation of divine things. And, according to the original, (in Heb. xi. 1,) the perception of these things is made dependent upon it. Christian knowledge springs from a living faith; it is a new process of thought upon a new principle; reflections are at work in a new sphere of life, and the dangers which threatened to compromise the interests of true Religion are now removed. *Credo ut intelligam.* The

Christian faith is intellectual, and is made fruitful in all manner of knowledge and spiritual understanding. The Christian Religion commences the process of healing where it ought to commence, viz. in the *heart* of man which is desperately wicked, and the fountain-head of human existence. It demands *a thoroughly new* heart, and a right spirit, and in so doing it avoids the follies of spurious creeds, which at all times put a new piece of cloth upon old garments.

When mankind therefore had corrupted their ways, and lost sight of God, God did not lose sight of them, but gave them a true Religion, which should at all times serve as a Standard of Truth in matters of Religion: a Religion which, flowing through the width and breadth of time and space, should gladden a desponding world, and rejoice the human soul in its weariness and despair.

CHAPTER III.

INTERNAL DEVELOPMENT AND CHARACTER OF PAGANISM.

1. HEATHENISM and Paganism are terms perfectly synonymous, the former being of Saxon, the latter of Latin origin. The Latin word *Paganus* signifies, however, originally nothing beyond a *peasant*, a *man of the country*, an *inhabitant of the village*, in contradistinction to people living in the town or city. The Anglo-Saxon *Heathen*, and the German *Haide*, or *Heide*, originally meant only a person living in a *heathy* district. The present sense of the terms Heathen and Pagan, according to which they signify an idolater, is, therefore, different from the primitive signification which etymology assigns to both words. The Christian Religion having celebrated its first and most conspicuous triumphs in large and populous places of the Roman empire, we descry Christian congregations in the towns and cities of Asia Minor, Italy, Spain, England, France and Germany, whilst the whole

country round about was still sitting in the darkness of idolatry and superstition.

In the year of our Lord 350, Idolatry was interdicted and driven back to the confines of the country. The word Pagan in its present sense, in which it signifies an idolatrous person, appears first in a law of Valentinian in the year 368; we find it also about the same time in the writings of Marinus Victorinus. He uses it in this sense both in his Arian controversy, and in his Commentary on the Epistle of St. Paul to the Galatians. In the days of Theodosius, the term *Pagan*, in the sense of an idolator, had obtained general currency. The light of the gospel shone upon the cities and towns, whilst Pagan ignorance still brooded over the mass of the country population; and it was natural that to the early Church, a *paganus*, an inhabitant of the country, and a worshipper of false gods, became synonymous terms, and were applied promiscuously at the beginning, until the whole country was converted to Christianity, and the term Pagan designated no longer an inhabitant of the country, (for this original sense of the term became obsolete in *usus loquendi*,) but an individual who was yet without Christ, and a stranger from the covenant of the gospel, having no hope, and living without God in this world.

2. The sense in which Paganism was viewed in the primitive Church was in perfect accordance with the word of God.

As, however, in all things, so also in this present instance, men will embrace erroneous ideas as soon as they cease comparing *spiritual things with spiritual things.* Paganism was looked upon by degrees as a pure and unmixed emanation of the devil. Now, although Paganism was emphatically "*the world which lieth in wickedness,*" yet there are other considerations which greatly modify this view of the case. When we recollect the fierce and bloody persecutions which had befallen the Church during the first centuries of its existence, we can well conceive how similar views were produced in the minds of the early Christians. And that the early Fathers, in their estimate of Paganism, were much nearer the truth than are many individuals of the present day, appears very clearly from Holy Scripture. According to the unequivocal testimony of Scripture, the Pagan world does worship *devils;* and sacrifices offered to them put men into connexion with those evil spirits. (Lev. xvii.; Deut. xxxii.; 2 Chron. xi.; Psalm cvi.; 1 Cor. x.; Rev. ix.)

Paganism was, however, looked upon by degrees in a light different from that in which it was viewed by the early Fathers; and a Pagan was considered an individual who worshipped images, and whose natural Religion was Polytheism. The Jews and Mohammedans, as well as the Christians, were considered worshippers of the true God. According to this view, it does not signify how correct or incorrect the notions of the Deity may be, or from what source they may

be derived. This definition of Paganism, according to which it includes all nations which are not Christian, or Mohammedan, or Jewish, has now been generally adopted; but it is, nevertheless, unscriptural, and militates against the letter and the spirit of Divine revelation.

But the above idea of Paganism only paved the way to one still more unchristian and anti-scriptural. There has been a certain class of people in Europe, whose *liberal views*, as they are termed, have led them to consider Pagan systems as expressions of pious and innocent religious feelings, which ought to be revered and held inviolable. Such as had once adopted those views, felt naturally bound to support them in every possible way; and several ingenious attempts have been made to exhibit the beauties of these spurious systems of belief. All the charms and graces which were at the command of poetry and sentimental feeling were freely and bountifully poured upon them. Where they could not help feeling ashamed of the absurdities of a degrading idolatry, all was done to mollify, by allegorical interpretation, the most offensive features, which are repugnant to every feeling of propriety and sound reason.

Yet, with all the goodwill to shield Pagan creeds from what they are pleased to call bigotry, these modern sages have displayed considerable uneasiness. When they maintained that there was a philosophical system concealed below the popular creeds, which was

materially superior to the latter, they betrayed anxiety to lean their own mortal systems of spurious Religion against the esoteric branches of Pagan idolatry. In so doing they impeach the persons acquainted with these philosophical mysteries with a studied concealment of the truth, and a studied deception in allowing and propagating tenets which were opposed to those which they really held. How many of our European Atheists or Pantheists have been found in the situation of the Ephesians, when they made a tremendous uproar, and cried out: "*Great is the Diana of the Ephesians!*"

Already, in the fourteenth century, Boccaccio had made the attempt to render Paganism more agreeable in aspect, and more attractive in form. Marsilius Ficinus, in the following century, directed attention to its philosophical treasures, and by degrees men of great talent undertook to establish a certain harmony between Judaism, Christianity, and Paganism; the latter being looked upon as a slight and modified degeneration of the Monotheism of the Bible. It was particularly in this line of argument that Vossius endeavoured to excel. Bochart, Banier, Bryant, Hallemann, and others, seemed charmed, and endeavoured to charm others, by the supposed discovery of the historical treasures which were considered to be contained in Paganism. *Bacon*, in his work on the wisdom of the ancients, directed the attention of the public to the *political* and *ethical* elements of Paganism. Again; others have metamorphosed mythological

systems into a regular almanac. Paganism was transformed into a system of astronomy, without any further ceremony. And the French savant, C. Dupuis, has not scrupled to declare our blessed and adorable Saviour to be nothing more than the *sun*, his *Church* nothing more than the *moon*, and the *twelve Apostles* nothing more than the *twelve signs of the zodiac!!!* Many authors, following his track, have found nothing in Paganism but an ill-judged and wild system of astronomical ideas. Natales Comes and Tollius, with others, have solved Pagan Mythologies in the crucible of the *chemist* and the natural philosopher.

Thus, each gratified himself in his own way in discovering in Paganism what he listed; and all the various methods of viewing the subject were calculated to disguise its monstrosity, to give it a more agreeable character, and to render it more attractive.

3. Before we proceed to give the scriptural view of the character of Paganism, we shall make a few general remarks as to the development of spurious Religion in the heart of man.

When Europe was yet under the sway of Spurious Philosophy, a theory obtained according to which mankind gradually emerged from idolatry and Polytheism. The primeval state of man was delineated as that of a savage, whose time was spent in a struggle for his subsistence, in a melancholy conflict with fierce elements and wild beasts. This theory was supported by a series of gratuitous assumptions, to explain the

gradual development of the social principle amidst chance, suggestions, and arbitrary conventionalities. This arbitrary method of reasoning is, however, at variance with the spirit of true Philosophy, with the remnants of ancient tradition, and with the records of sacred and profane history. It was natural that the above theory should have as quickly exploded as it was commonly believed at one period. The contrary of what it propounded was shown to be the case by every philosopher, by every student of Mythology, as well as by the common traditions which are preserved in the Pagan world.

The degeneracy of mankind is a very common topic of complaint with ancient philosophers; and the almost universal chronological division of the duration of the world into four different ages, and the fact that each succeeding age was inferior to the previous, clearly shows the futile character of the above-mentioned theory. How otherwise shall we understand the order in which the golden age is followed by the silver one, and the silver one by the age of brass, and the age of brass by the iron age, if the degeneracy of the human race be not an article of every form of spurious Religion?

That from the first the religious condition of man was that of Polytheism or Atheism, whence, by some fortuitous circumstance, he had obtained certain ideas of God and divine things, is contradicted by the common testimony of all sages in all ages. On the other hand,

the account of the Bible, if viewed even hypothetically, can alone give a satisfactory solution of those otherwise inexplicable phenomena that crowd upon our minds. With this lamp to guide our footsteps, all difficulties are made plain, and every thing before our eyes appears mournfully illustrated.

Man was created good and holy; and if there had been no degeneracy from this primitive condition, there would have been no degrading system of Paganism. Man enjoyed a knowledge of his Maker, which could only be limited by the disproportion between finite faculties and the infinite nature of the object of his knowledge. The attributes of the Almighty were reflected in his pure nature as in a bright mirror. All his thoughts, affections, and feelings were regulated by the Divine will and pleasure. All his hopes, joys, and wishes were consecrated to God, and concentrated in his adorable Maker. In this intimate communion with God, in which he was to grow up in the likeness of his Maker, man was happy; and he drank from the fountain of this happiness as long as he was holy.

But the germ of all his degeneracy, the first cause of the anomaly in his moral nature, in which he worships the creatures of his own imagination, is introduced upon his separation from God. Man desired to possess a happiness in his own resources independent of his Maker, and this was his destruction. In falling, his whole constitution was shattered and

broken. Man would pursue a way and a will of his own, and to the best of his abilities he carved out new paths of happiness and bliss. The harmony of his mental faculties was disturbed; his peace of conscience was broken; his love to his Maker had waxen cold; and, as from a shattered mirror, the Divine image was reflected distorted, beclouded, multiplied, and sadly obscured.

As, however, man could not separate himself entirely from God, and become *godless* in the absolute sense of the term, he now endeavoured to bring the Deity down to his own sinful standard. With a view to pursue his wicked career with the very least inconvenience, he endeavoured to undermine and weaken as far as possible the authority which conscience claimed within his breast. The noble remnant was to be defiled and polluted, to protect himself against any reproaches which might come down upon his head, whilst he created and moulded his gods according to his own imaginations and lusts.

The origin of all the atrocities which man committed in matters of Religion, is founded on his aversion to God and the spirituality and purity of the Divine character. The presence of God was once the source of unspeakable happiness and joy; now it became a burden intolerable. Man was determined to forget God, whose holy character was felt to be entirely uncongenial with his own. As God once impressed his image upon man, whom he created, so man now

created deities in "*his own image, in his likeness created he them!*" Man would never form his deities upon the model of a holy Being, whom he disliked and disowned. He receded from all resemblance to the holy, omniscient, and glorious character of God, to the utmost distance to which he possibly could recede. Impure and depraved to the very core, he neither could, nor yet would he, conceive a God of immaculate purity, which would have defeated the object he had in view, which was, to escape the torment of living in the presence of a holy God. Man was proud and haughty, and he would no longer acknowledge the supreme power of a Divine Sovereign. He was full of evil passions and iniquity, and could no longer conceive a God of love and infinite compassion. The germ of all manner of Pagan idolatry and abomination was thus sown in the lascivious soil of a corrupt nature, and it brought forth *much fruit, some fifty, some a hundred-fold!*

Man would commit sin; and in order to do this with every comfort, he drew down his Maker to his own sinful standard, instead of raising his sensual mind to the invisible Godhead. When they knew God, the Pagans glorified him not as God; neither were they thankful. When man considered himself to be wise, he became a fool; for a fool only can seek things where they are not to be found; a fool only can change the glory of the incorruptible God into the image of corruptible things.

Man fell deeper and deeper. God is a Spirit, and his spiritual divinity disappears more and more from man's religious horizon; until he at last, like a perfect fool, seeks his very gods deliberately among the birds of heaven, among the creeping things of the dusty globe, and amongst the beasts that perish! Man would have his gods evident to his sight, and worship such a one as himself. This is the secret of all manner of idolatry. When once the mind of man has been given over to "*strong delusion, that it should believe a lie,*" the objects of religious worship will be confined to no limits. It will descend from one abyss of a degrading superstition to another; which superstition has ever proved "*vanity and vexation of spirit*" to its deluded victim.

4. Paganism cannot be known by itself; without the torch of divine revelation, we grope in the dark. There is indeed such a bewildering aspect in counterfeit Religion, with its hideous forms of spurious worship, such a confusion of the darkened phases of error, such a vast variety of discordant elements,—that we must err in our conclusions and inferences, unless guided by the heavenly light which irradiates the Christian Religion. Hence the waste of talents, and the misapplication of profound erudition and learning, which many authors have incurred in treating upon this melancholy subject. Pagan creeds are invariably the result of a spurious seeking and feeling after God; they are the abortive productions of broken intellects

and darkened minds, which have "*gone astray, like lost sheep having no shepherd.*"

The records of what has been already shown to be the standard of truth in religious matters, represent Paganism at all times as being opposed to the true Religion in nature and tendency. There is ever made a marked distinction between the *Church of God*, and the *world of Paganism*. There was originally built a wall of partition between them. God had made choice of one nation out of many nations. He gave them precept upon precept, and line upon line, by figurative and typical instruction. Promise was balanced by precept, and the whole religious, political, and social character of the Mosaic constitution was framed in direct opposition to Paganism. Hence, under the Old Testament, all were designated *Pagans*, or *Heathen nations*, or *Gentiles*, who were beyond the wall of partition, which had been raised to protect God's peculiar people.

Likewise, in the New Testament, a Pagan is every one who is a foreigner to the knowledge, and a stranger to the blessings and privileges, of the covenant of the triune God. Whosoever contrives to fashion a deity from any other ideas than those contained in the Scripture of truth, *the same has made an idol*, and is become a worshipper of a false deity! Hence it has been the language of the Church in all ages: "*We know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness. And we know that the Son*

of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, even his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life. LITTLE CHILDREN, KEEP YOURSELVES FROM IDOLS!"

5. When Paganism is viewed in the light of divine revelation, it appears in a double aspect. Hence the Apostles addressed them at one time as *very devotional*, and at other times they speak of them as *Polytheists* and *Atheists*. (Acts xvii. 22, and Eph. ii. 12. See both in the original.) The Holy Scriptures recognise in Paganism, on the one hand, the kingdom of darkness. They describe idolatry as being adultery with stocks and stones. They characterise Pagan creeds as demanding sacrifices offered to devils and not unto God. (Lev. xvii. Deut. xxii. 1 Cor. x. Deut. xiii. xvii. Lev. xvii. Jer. xliv. 2 Cor. vi. 1 Pet. iv. Rev. xxi.) This is the dark side of Paganism.

When we, on the other hand, observe the aspirations of the human mind; when we hear of the prayers and supplications, when we listen to the vows and high resolves of the Pagan idolater; when we give heed to his desire after deliverance and peace,—when we think of Paganism with these associations, we recognise nobler features, which call forth a strong feeling of sympathy in our minds. Heathenism is of the devil, who is a murderer from the beginning, and a liar; but when we observe the actings of the human mind under this strange tyranny, we observe remnants of a nobler constitution. If it can be said that the

inanimate and brute creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together, as we know it does, until it shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, and brought to partake of the glorious liberty of God's children, how much more may we expect this to be the case with regard to the rational portion of creation, who are themselves called to partake of that liberty in their own persons! Man cannot exist without a species of spurious peace; he has something mysteriously awful about him, with which he approaches every kind of Religion, however false it may be, and is seen to cleave with despair to something supernatural, something beyond the sphere of earthly existence. There is a degree of susceptibility to receive the "*truth, which maketh free,*" and a desire for that true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

Paganism in this point of view is not of a diabolical character, but is like unto the Prodigal Son, who gathered all his substance together, took a long journey into a far country, and there wasted his goods with riotous living; whilst the elder brother (*i.e.* the chosen people) abides in the father's house, to enjoy the comforts and smiles of home, and to serve him "for many years." Whatever may be the case of the Prodigal Son, he has yet a home; he is still a son, who has still a father who waits to be gracious to a repenting child; he has still a heart to think of returning; he has eyes to lift up to heaven; a mouth to make a

confession of his guilt and his folly, and feet to carry him to his own home.

He had desired to go abroad, and he even went with his father's sanction, who well knew that future misery would produce anxiety to return to a comfortable home. The goods which he took away with him from his father's house, and which he wasted in the divers systems of the natural Religion of Paganism, are no other than the relics of primitive revelation; the first impressions and recollections of the childhood of the human family. But the Pagan prodigal sons were accompanied by a schoolmaster, which was "*the law written in their hearts;*" and even at the remotest distance of their eccentric orbits, there was something to attract their minds, and that was the consciousness that "*we are his offspring.*" (Acts xvii. 29.) And when they had found misery, distress, hunger, nakedness, instead of peace and happiness, the Pagan nations were meet for the harvest of the Gospel, having in vain *searched* for wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.

6. Paganism not only retains some of the noblest features of a shattered humanity; it embodies likewise some noble remnants of truth. If we ask, (and who can forbear to inquire?) whence all the various torrents of Pagan systems took their rise, we receive always one and the same answer. When we compare the Pagan systems of belief with the most ancient records of the Bible, we discover that the history of

the primitive days of the human race, and the primary elements of sacred tradition, constitute the foundation of every ancient system of Pagan Mythology. Truth and fable, Mythology and history, are interwoven one with the other in a most grotesque and strange manner.

We have already alluded to the analogies of genuine and spurious Religion, and found that they are as natural and necessary as the resemblance of spurious coin to that which is genuine. The latter is represented by the former in a corrupt form, and imitated in after ages. This view of the case is confirmed by those traces of resemblance which we find to increase in number and force, in proportion as we go back to the cradle of mankind, as the common source whence they all emanated.

We cannot deny that Paganism contains *some* truth, but such as there is it *is held in unrighteousness!* Pure falsehood can never bind the human mind for any length of time. It maintains its power over the minds of people only because it contains some elements of truth. It is not possible that a naked lie should be able to move mankind, however deluded they may be, to make such sacrifices as have continually been made by the Pagan world. It was not purely superstition which impelled reasonable beings to sacrifice whole hecatombs unto the gods. It was not ordinary madness which led the priests of Cybele to exercise the most unnatural atrocity upon their own

bodies. It was not a common lasciviousness which led noble females at Babylon to sacrifice their most precious good at the shrine of the goddess Mylitta. It was not want of natural affection, nor was it purely a barbarous cruelty, which led human parents to throw their children into the glowing arms of Moloch. It was not want of better occupation which stimulated the ancients to excavate stupendous mountains of rocks all over the face of the globe; nor was it mere ambition which moved thousands of individuals to undergo the most awful privations, to make the greatest sacrifices of comfort, to incur the most terrific penances, to sacrifice the most precious goods which they had upon the altar of spurious Religion. But we have all these things because, in the first place, no time, no corruption, and no accident, could obliterate that part of man's nature by which he must *seek and feel after God, if haply he might find him;* and secondly, because there are noble remnants of truth in spurious systems of belief!

We find a striking analogy, in the first place, in the history of the creation as it is given in the Bible, and in almost all the fragments of tradition which exist scattered over the world of Paganism. It matters nothing to our argument, that the Pagans could not have derived their ideas from the Bible. This is not what we maintain, except it be in some few instances. But because these things have actually occurred, the Pagans had accounts of them by way of primitive

tradition. We admit that the Pagans were in possession of certain facts relative to the creation and the flood, prior to the days of Moses, the inspired scribe of sacred tradition. We likewise maintain that they had corrupted it previously to that period, which was one of the reasons why Moses was to write it at last. And Moses, the servant of God, might in this respect have prefaced his account with the words of St. Luke, at the commencement of his gospel narrative. It was because many had taken in hand to set forth a declaration of the creation of the world and the primal history of man, that it seemed good to Moses, the servant of God, to write them in order, having had a perfect understanding of all things from the first, that the Israel of God might know the certainty of those things wherein they had been instructed! What we have, therefore, in the one case as a plain authentic record, we have in the other disguised under a profusion of grotesque ornaments and fables. It is not in our plan to show the analogies of spurious creeds to the system of revelation, in reviewing some of the leading systems of Mythology; but certain it is, that wherever we have any notice of the creation amongst Pagans in general, it always contains allusions to the Mosaic account. And as regards the confusion of events connected with the flood, and incidents belonging to the creation of the world, we can very easily account for it.

The leading facts of the original condition of man,

of the glories and the happiness of Paradise, of his temptation and his melancholy degeneracy, are all more or less transcribed in Pagan Mythologies. The universal prevalence of sacrificial rites is in itself an evidence of their being derived from some common source; but according to Pagan accounts, sacrifices were instituted either by the deity himself, or by the patriarch of the human family; and the detailed account of their institution points in the one case to *Noah*, or to *Adam* himself. Whilst the miscellaneous traditions of Paganism relative to the period between the creation and the deluge are without number, it has been thought that the almost universal prevalence of divine triads in Pagan Mythology, arose from the historical fact of the progenitor of the antediluvian world, and the father of the postdiluvian race, having each had three sons.

Nothing, however, has been so universally adopted and set forth in Pagan Mythology, as the traditional accounts of the great catastrophe of the flood, which was given in the most distinct, and yet again in the most extravagant figures. We recognise in this, as well as in other allusions to the history from the creation to the flood, the noble features of the original; and we must venerate truth, wherever it may be found. There are elements and fragments of a better state of things in Pagan Mythology; and when we ascend its muddy streams, we are always carried back to that pure fountain of light, which is opened in the

revelation from heaven. There are misrepresentations, but we have sufficient analogies to trace the spurious likeness. Even Celsus, the Epicurean, felt this, when he endeavoured to make the building of the tower of Babylon, and the confusion of tongues, appear to have been copied from one of the fables in Homer; and when he considered the flood of the Genesis as being derived from the story of Deucalion, and the Mosaical Paradise from the gardens of Alcinous, and the burning of Sodom and Gomorrah from the story of Phaeton. Origen, however, very ably replies, by showing him that exactly the reverse had been the case; that Paganism had borrowed from the Bible, and not the Bible from Paganism.

7. Yet, however great and numerous the elements of truth may be, which Paganism retained in its systems, we must not on that account forget the dark side of the question. This admonition is particularly necessary, as the existence and practice of idolatry is too often looked upon without that holy indignation which only the Scriptures produce and maintain. Men have in this respect swerved very far from the standard which is given us in the Gospel. The word of God every where reprobates idolatry as an abominable thing which God abhors. To provide against its becoming universal, and to introduce the elements for its eventual destruction, was the principal object of tke Mosaic constitution. Idolatry was to be opposed by divinely given symbols, and it was expressly pro-

hibited by the first and second commandments of the Decalogue; the first being given to confirm the worship of Jehovah, and the second was to prohibit any idolatrous form of worship with reference even to the true God. Idolatry makes a visible symbol of the invisible God, who has forbidden not only the worship of any false god, but even the worship of himself by the medium of a graven image. The golden calves of Aaron, and the calves of Jeroboam, it is believed, were intended to be representatives of Jehovah; yet the worship occasioned in one instance the slaughter of three thousand persons, and in the other the deportation of the house of Israel into captivity, from which they never returned! When the Israelites were tempted to sacrifice to Baal, and to commit idolatry at Peor, *twenty-four thousand* were slain at once, and the Moabites were rooted out because they proved a snare unto Israel in that respect. According to the mind of Jehovah, credit was to be denied to an idolater. All this marks idolatry as the unclean thing in the eyes of Him, who is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever!

If God still suffers Paganism, it is because he waits to be gracious, commanding all men every where to repent, having appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness. In setting up an idol, we affront the Majesty of Heaven, to whom as the only Potentate we owe supreme allegiance. It makes no material difference as to the nature of

idolatry; were it even cast into the mould of the purest morality, it would still be an unclean thing, and nothing could diminish the guilt of the offence. Idolatry excludes from the favour and the presence of God.

8. There have been indeed not wanting learned divines, in divers countries of Christendom, who have given it as their opinion, that Christ will be the judge of men, as far as he was known to them here upon earth; but that those who died without having had the opportunity of hearing the Gospel, would be furnished with the means to know God and his Son Jesus Christ, between their death and the day of judgment. This their opinion has been chiefly supported by the passage in 1 Pet. iv. 5, where the Holy Ghost declares that Christ was to judge the living and the dead; and where he immediately adds, that even on that account was the Gospel preached to the dead, in order that, if even they could not escape the judgment on their bodies, which demands death on the part of a sinner, they might yet be saved according to the Spirit, (verse 6.) This they conceived to be in perfect harmony with the expression of the same Apostle, (1 Pet. iii. 19, 20;) according to which Christ "descended into hell," and preached unto the spirits in prison, which sometime were disobedient. From hence they further inferred, that the grace of God was offered to those men, in a manner unknown to us, who had not the opportunity of becoming

acquainted with it in this present life; that God will that all men should come to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus; that the final judgment would be according to the obedience of men to the truth, which was heard by them either before or after death; that the glorious plan of redemption would be incomprehensible without such a provision being made; that we should have nothing to dispel the fearful gloom which envelops those that die in unavoidable ignorance of God; that only under such circumstances, which are believed to be intimated in the above passages, the perpetuity of the punishment of the damned, and the eternal bliss of the ransomed, as plainly stated in Scripture, would agree with divine wisdom, goodness, and righteousness; that the idea of a righteous judgment had not only reference to moral worth and demerit in general, but that it supposed acceptation or rejection of a proffered mercy, fulfilment or non-fulfilment of the condition upon which it was offered. It has been further inferred by these divines, that only the conscious and obstinate refusal of divine mercy made man incapable of happiness; and that this deliberate refusal, which gives evidence of an incorrigible state of mind, was "the sin unto death," of which our Lord said that it was unpardonable in this life, and in the world to come; and which consists in an open rejection, in deliberate blasphemy, and conscious grievance of the Holy Ghost.

The secret things belong unto the Lord. One thing, however, is certain from the word of God, and that is, that the Pagans are accountable subjects of the divine government. They possess all the requisite powers which render them accountable beings. They have intellect to understand the law which was written upon the tables of their heart. They have a conscience to feel obligations, and faculties to do the will of their God and Creator, *who never reapeth where he hath not sown.*

They are said (Rom. i.) to be under the divine displeasure, in consequence of their having suppressed and neglected to exemplify the genuine natural Religion, which they were expected to cultivate. The knowledge of God was attainable by all Pagans, as far as God did expect it, for "*God has showed it unto them.*" The peculiar character of God is indeed unattainable to the kind of natural Religion which Paganism was to exhibit; but they were yet to understand the nature of the divinity in the things which were made; and as Paganism has not attained this knowledge of God from conscience and nature, its members "*are without excuse.*" When they knew God as God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful! The ingratitude of Paganism is very striking. They always received the bounties of Providence as things which were naturally due to them. Their superstitions never commenced with giving of thanks where it was not due; but it was the dread of

ill, which they desired to avert by religious ceremonies. The Hindoo worships the planets; but amongst them he will adore those only from which he has to dread some evil; and he never thinks of worshipping those of which he knows, by the laws of astrology, that they are favourably disposed towards him.

God was to be praised and acknowledged, even upon Pagan grounds. Where this did not act as an antidote to the vanity of the Pagan mind, all was lost, and the remaining wholesome parts were gradually destroyed. Pagans are described as sinning wilfully; "*Who, knowing the judgments of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.*" They are represented as being conscious of accountability, and of guilt. Not having the law in the written form, "they are a law unto themselves, their own consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another."

Paganism knows that there is but one God, and yet it worships gods without number. It knows that the Maker of all things is wise, and holy, and good; and yet the gods to whom it sacrifices are foolish, and unholy, and depraved. Hence the Bible is true when it declares that the Pagans "*know God,*" and that they "*know not God.*" The greatest inconsistencies meet together in the mind and in the conduct of the degraded idolater. He answers generally to the question as to the number of gods, *that God is one;* and

yet he adores millions of gods! He is aware that God is omnipresent; and yet he thinks to confine his personal existence to a stock or a stone. The Pagan feels God is almighty; and yet he fancies that he can do with him whatever he listeth. He feels God must be holy, but never hesitates to ascribe to him all manner of evil deeds and evil passions. He is convinced of the truth, that God will judge the sinner, and yet he delights in committing sin, and looks upon him as the patron of all manner of vice. The idolater knows too well that God is exalted above everything, but he yet thinks to represent him worthily by a four-footed beast, by a bird, by a stock or a stone, or by some monstrous image. The idolater feels that he ought to worship the Creator, but he worships the creature more than the Creator. The Pagan thus has the truth, but he holds it in unrighteousness, and changes it into a lie. Every view that can be taken of idolatry is a lie against the Divine majesty. The number of idols is a lie against the Divine unity. Their corporeal and material nature is a lie against the spirituality of God. Their local confinement is a lie against his omnipresence and immensity. Their limited nature is a lie against his universal rule and all-comprehensive government. Their follies are so many grievous lies against his infinite wisdom. Their criminal characters and vices are so many impudent lies against his unspotted holiness and most perfect purity.

The cause of all these grave offences of the Pagan world lies not indeed in their judgments, but in their affections. *They would not retain God in their knowledge, but they would retain their sins in their hearts and lives.* The holiness of God frowns upon sin, and his infinite power renders these frowns terrible to their consciences. His presense produces fear and hatred of his character at the same time. Because their works are evil, they flee from God's presence, and love darkness rather than light. As long as they stood before God as wilful transgressors of his holy law, and as long as they felt weak before an offended judge, there was no prospect of happiness and peace of mind.

Instead, however, of changing themselves, the Pagans would rather change the character of God; and such was their success, that before long they could stand before their deities and contemplate them without alarm: they were all such ones as themselves in every point of view. As God created man in his own image, man now fashions his gods in his own unholy likeness, as vile as himself, as full of all manner of pride and malice as himself, as much the creatures of caprice and the slaves of passion as himself. Yea, to crown human folly, the Pagan degraded his deity below the level of corruptible men, in being made like unto beasts, and birds, and reptiles. The Pagan gods assume every form and figure, every character and every attribute, their worshippers may wish to bestow

upon them. They are worshipped in every form imaginable; and no mode of service is too vile and too abominable not to be acceptable. They are satisfied with flowers, with money, with vows, and with pilgrimages. If the worshipper desire retirement and solitude, he may have it; if he be merry, there is loud song and dance in abundance; if he be addicted to the grosser vices, the deity shows by his own example, that he can never be excelled in vile abominations. If filled with remorse, if tormented by a guilty conscience, and the forebodings of the judgment to come, the deity prescribes a set of disgusting and empty ceremonies, in which to divert his heavy laden soul, and to calm his troubled conscience. If desirous to obtain heaven by good works, the deity brings down the law to whatever level man may wish to have it. In short, the Pagan god is made to comply with every wish. He is made to suit his character, his law, and his attributes, to the habits and desires of his worshipper. Thus the Pagan falls down and worships the work of his own hand; the creature of his fear and of his lust.

> "Their gods are hieroglyphics of the heart:
> To fashion them their guilt and fears combine."

The glory of God is changed into dishonour; his truth into a lie. The mind is dark and very foolish; and man himself a slave of divers lusts and pleasures; being full of enmity against man, and full of hatred against God.

The Pagan is without holiness; and without holiness he cannot see God, and is disqualified for heaven. He has become alienated from God in a superlative degree. With a reprobate mind he pays divine honours to his own devices and inventions. Regarding their final state we can, therefore, not be in the dark. God is righteous, and will not condemn any portion of mankind for having violated principles and laws which have never been revealed to them. He will accept from a man of what he has, and not of what he has not. But a man, as long as he remains a Pagan, cannot be saved, because he habitually transgresses the law which God hath revealed to him, and which is, that he should *love his Maker, and serve him as his Lord!* The idolator doeth the things which are not convenient; he turneth aside and feedeth on ashes. "Neither fornicators, nor IDOLATORS, nor adulterers, nor thieves, nor drunkards, shall inherit the kingdom of God." If the fearful, the unbelievers, the abominable, the murderers, the whoremongers, the sorcerers, will be admitted into the presence of God, so also will *idolators*, who commit all these things. We cannot be charitable at the expense of truth. To palliate or deny the guilt of Paganism does not alter the unhappy condition of its votaries. To form charitable opinions, and to indulge in idle hopes, never does good, but always injury. Nothing but the gospel can redeem the world from the thraldom of Pagan idolatry. As long as

their sin and guilt and misery be doubted, no remedy will be administered.

9. Thus in Paganism, on the one hand, we have remnants of stately columns, which once adorned the eternal temple of truth; and on the other, we are witnessing the workings of the power of darkness. We have thirstings after salvation, and a superstitious vanity of mind at the same time. The Pagan felt a conflict within his own person, and he endeavoured to bring about a truce between these conflicting powers. The systems of Paganism contain the efforts of the human mind to appease and to reconcile these powers. The Pagan world looked for peace in obeying the law of their gods; but as this law had emanated from the corrupt nature of man, obedience to the will of Heaven was no more than obedience to his own will and pleasure. Conscience was weakened, and forced to accommodate its demands in accordance with the inclinations of man.

Man was convinced of the necessity of having a lawgiver superior to himself, and he felt his absolute need of an authoritative rule, to which he might surrender his own will, which was his destruction, and of the fallible nature of which he had obtained the most painful evidence. The existence of God was a point which was never questioned, "*for God had shown it unto them.*" But how should they become acquainted with the apocryphal deity? This was a gulph which caused great inconvenience. Instead, however, of wait-

ing for such a revelation, Paganism at once invested the deity with such attributes and desires as he wished to give unto it. The imaginary deity was commissioned to speak the sentiments of man; and thus the human will and pleasure were again invested with divine authority. Religion, therefore, which was expected to remedy the evil, turned out to be nothing but an expression of man's own character. His passions and his imaginations were stamped with a religious and a divine character. Man had just done the reverse of what he contemplated accomplishing. Harmony was brought about between the conflicting powers, but it was done by human nature being made the legislative power. According to the testimony of one of their own sages, the Pagans transferred the *human nature to the gods, whilst they would have done better to transfer the character of the deity to humanity!* But this was beyond their power. Hence Homer painted his Jupiter deficient in every divine attribute. Juno appears as the victim of eternal jealousy. Mars personifies all that is violent and ferocious; and Mercury appears as the patron of theft and artifice. This is the character of all Pagan systems. They are all from below, and carry the image of the fallen nature of man upon their very forehead. How broad it made the road that leadeth to destruction!

Idolatry is a corrupt institution, which takes hold upon the whole nature of man, and which involves a

whole system of manners and sentiments. Paganism moulds the whole character of its votaries, and is intimately blended together with all their ideas, infirmities, passions, and fears. Its influence is felt in all the ramifications of human nature, and it presses upon it like the atmosphere, from every direction.

All Mythologies are from below, and they endeavour in vain to conceal their low and earthly origin. As human productions, they are always interwoven with the national history, the national character, the national vices and virtues; with their habits, learning, and literature; with their civil and social institutions. The language of their sacred books is the language of the deity; the remains of antique architecture are considered the works of the gods. Everything assumes a religious character, and goes forth under the sanction of divinity.

All these circumstances greatly aggravate and increase the difficulty of overthrowing these Mythologies. They are exactly what human nature delights to set up; and the world will love its own things. The national creeds of Paganism reflect the natural and moral physiognomy of the respective nations. Thus, for instance, the gods of sensual Athens bear a different stamp from those of warlike Sparta in the days of old. Hence the Roman creed was naturally different from that of Carthage; hence also the Asiatic creeds vary according to the different character of the nations and the nature of the climate.

It is in this fact that we have the most powerful bulwark which opposes itself to a more rapid spread of Christianity. We have not only to overthrow the altars of a national Religion; we have not only to expel imaginary deities from the minds of the people; but the attempt to extirpate these creeds becomes almost equivalent to an attempt to extirpate, as it were, the roots of their social, national, civil, domestic, and moral existence! But every plant which our heavenly Father has not planted, has its time of growth, and as certainly, also, its day of decay. Paganism carries within itself the elements of dissolution, and the remains of that pernicious system will sooner or later crumble into the dust.

"*Babylon hath been a golden cup, that made all the earth drunken: the nations have drunken of her wine; therefore the nations are mad. But saith the Lord, Behold, I am against thee, O destroying mountain, which destroyest all the earth: and I will stretch out mine hand upon thee, and roll thee down from the rocks, and I will make thee a burned mountain.*"

CHAPTER IV.

MORAL, CIVIL, AND SOCIAL INFLUENCE OF SPURIOUS RELIGION UPON THE WORLD IN GENERAL.

1. THE reader may feel surprise at the inscription of the present chapter, but we humbly trust that a few reflections upon the subject will not prove so unprofitable as might be expected. It may, perhaps, be wholesome to the Christian to glance now and then at the dark parts of the habitations of vice and cruelty, which may make him feel more thankful for, and prize more highly, the intrinsic excellency of his holy Religion. As we, however, advanced a sketch of the origin, the development, the character, and the general working of true Religion, before we entered upon the consideration of spurious systems of belief, so we shall now, first of all, give a few hints as to the real character of what Christianity has wrought upon earth. As mankind generally did not enjoy the blessing of true Religion before the Christian era, we shall always find it difficult to give a just estimate of the moral and civil influence of true Religion, owing to the

shortness of time during which it has been generally enjoyed by the human race. An estimate of its beneficial effects can properly be made only at the end of the world, when all that now consists only in the germ, shall have been brought to perfection. But even this view of the case will be strongly in favour of its miraculous operations; for, if the Christian era be short in proportion to the previous ages of the world; if many centuries, again, of this short period have been sadly beclouded; and if, nevertheless, great and marvellous changes have been wrought in the complexion of things during this comparatively short period, how wonderfully great shall be the blessed effects in future ages!

Again; it must be remembered that the operations of Christianity, as being chiefly of a spiritual character, cannot well be measured by the fallible standard of human estimate. There will, indeed, always be certain prominent features which may strike the observer; but the most essential peculiarities of the salutary effects of Christianity do not fall within the limits of our horizon at once. The most lovely flowers of the plants which the heavenly Father hath planted, unfold their fragrance and their beauty in secret places. The purer and the more spiritual the effects of the Christian Religion, the more obscure and unobtrusive they will appear. As Nature generally utters her voice on being torn and tormented, but is folded up in the profoundest silence when she produces

plenty and peace; even so in the history of Religion we hear generally more of the abuses; but its salutary influences are felt most deeply by the sufferer who is comforted, and they are best known to the angel that numbers the tears which have been dried up. Who can enter the secret chambers of prayer, and behold the incense of pure devotion, of holy resolution, of high resolves, of wrestling against sin, of sacred vows, of genuine humility, of ardent love to God and to the brethren? All these things are still as the shining of the light, quiet like the growing of plants. They do not, nor can they appear in the pages of general history. The moral beauty of the primitive Church would not shine as brightly as it does, if it had not been for the persecutions which now and then opened the veil, and permitted us to look into the heart of some goodly martyr, or some other saint of whom the world was not worthy. We know little as it is; but we maintain that we should know still less if it had not been for the public opposition which Christianity endured. In the primitive Church it could be said that "they live in their native country like strangers. They live in the flesh, but not after the flesh. They live upon earth, but have their conversation in heaven. They obey the laws, but their lives are above the law. They love all men, and are persecuted, disowned, and condemned by all. When they are cursed, they bless their enemies. In short, what the soul is in the body, the Christians are in the

world. As the soul is invisible, and yet supports and animates the whole body, so is the Christian in the world." In the quiet and unobtrusive way of her adorable head, the Church of Christ goes about in the form of a servant, and thus accomplishes, like him, the very mightiest of works.

In the ordinary style of ecclesiastical history we discover least what is meant by the moral effects of Christianity. Church history generally walks upon the high-roads, and perambulates the walls and bulwarks of distinctive confessions, and the decrees of councils and the dissenting bodies of the Church. It neither enters the closet, nor leads into the Christian circles of domestic life. The life of the believer, "*is hid with Christ in God.*" When he prays, he enters into his closet and shuts his door; when he fasts, he anoints his head and washes his face. When he gives alms, he does not sound the trumpet before him, that he may have glory of man; but he doeth it in secret, and his left hand knoweth not what his right hand doeth to honour the Father who seeth in secret. The character of spurious Religion is far otherwise; scarcely has a good work been accomplished, when the sound of the trumpet publishes the deed in the synagogue and in the streets. This hypocritical character of spurious Religion reminds the writer strongly of the natural propensity of the hen, which invariably makes an effective proclamation on having made herself useful by multiplying the eggs of her mistress.

Again; the salutary influence of Christianity upon the civil history of the world has been often disowned, because it aimed first of all to regenerate the principles of the personal, domestic, and social character of society. Hence the fact, that Christianity had not a prominent and visible effect upon the political condition of the world till a considerably later period than the commencement of the Christian era. And is it to be wondered at that some time was necessary to cleanse the leaven of Paganism from the corners of civil life, with which it was so closely connected? The Pagan forms of philosophy, poetry, architecture, and other branches of knowledge, were retained in the first centuries of the Christian era, until the Christian influence had gained sufficient strength to create new forms, and the new wine could be put into new bottles.

There is, however, another difficulty in forming a due estimate of the salutary effects of the Christian Religion; and this arises from a danger of disowning what has been accomplished by spurious Religion. It has been the fashion with some authors to blacken the virtues of Paganism, with a view to give an additional lustre to Christian morality. This is as unfair and unjust, as it is unwise and ill-judged. When we read, for instance, in the sacred books of the Hindoo, that we are not only to forgive, but to do good to our enemies, who seek our destruction,—like the sandal-tree, which perfumes the axe which is engaged in cutting it down,—it behoves us to appreciate these

precious pearls, which shine beneath a mouldering mass of a base superstition. We need not degrade the few noble characters of Pagan antiquity, with a view to exalt the heroes of Christianity. The Gospel morality needs none of these shades to shine forth in its unequalled beauty and brightness. It needs no *chronique scandaleuse*, in order to exalt its moral strength. The bright mirror of genuine Religion has no need to breathe calumny upon other mirrors, in order to be considered the brightest of all. The prayers of Cornelius are heard, and his alms are had in remembrance in the sight of God, with whom of a truth there is no respect of persons. "In every nation, he that feareth God and worketh righteousness is accepted with him." He is the God of the Gentiles also, and has not left himself without witness in the natural Religion of the Pagan world.

How unfair, for instance, would it be in every point of view, were we to contrast single deeds, instead of comparing the whole moral tone of different systems of belief! How fallacious would be the result, were we to compare merely single individuals, instead of whole nations and communities! How strange would be the effect, were we to compare the amiable, virtuous, and modest Pagan Julian, with the passionate, suspicious, and cruel temperament of the Christian emperor Constantine the Great! What an altogether wrong estimate we should form from these individuals of Pagan and Christian morality! Again, were we to

compare the outburstings of the moral corruption within the pale of the visible Church, which are by *no means attributable* to the principles of genuine Religion, with those more cheering features of Pagan morality, which are not owing to Pagan systems of belief, but to the remnants of the otherwise shattered constitution of the moral nature of man, how totally false would be our estimate of both genuine and spurious Religion!

We need not be reluctant to acknowledge what Paganism has accomplished in civil and social life; and we may yet show, at the same time, how all these relations in life have been infinitely ennobled by the benignant influence of Christianity. And it will, besides, always be a notorious fact, that the bare civilization of Paganism has been always associated with the rudest barbarity, and with the most abominable immorality. It is hoped, a generally correct view has been given of the character of Paganism. We have observed a lamentable poverty of religious ideas, and we shall perceive in this final chapter, how ill calculated spurious Religion has ever been to propagate the elements of sound civilization, and to promote the true happiness of man even in a temporal point of view.

Yet it cannot be denied, that in the providential kingdom of Almighty God, who is "*the King of nations*," every nation has to accomplish that part which has been assigned to it. Even Paganism, as

such, was to prepare certain stones for the building up of that great temple of God's everlasting kingdom of happiness and peace. Israel, in contradistinction to all other nations, bore the character of deep humility; they were to live a life of faith, and to wait in patient hope. Israel was to expect nothing from its own wisdom and power, but every thing from Jehovah, who was their strength and their Redeemer. Israel alone of all nations was to expect every thing from futurity, and nothing from the present. The promises, the types, and the prophecies, with all the rites of the Theocratical constitution, pointed significantly into future ages. Israel was a prophet indeed, the voice of a preacher in the wilderness of Paganism, to prepare the way of the Lord. The general corruption of man was made to appear in very marked features throughout their whole history; and they appear the more dark, the more conspicuous the glory by which they were surrounded as the chosen generation. But even when they were visited by heavy judgments for partaking of the ways of the Gentiles, it became apparent that they were a peculiar people with a peculiar calling! As Israel was distinguished by the purely religious tendency of its education, so, on the other hand, Paganism shone by its cultivation of arts and sciences, by worldly civilization and accomplishments. The Phœnician workmen built the temple of Jehovah; but in this temple the only true and living God was worshipped by the Hebrews!

Whatever Paganism was lamentably deficient in, we find to have been prominently brought forth amongst the people of God. Whatever Israel was deficient in, was richly accomplished in Pagan systems of belief. *Arts and sciences* should, according to the purpose of God, come *from the Gentiles;* but *grace and "salvation cometh from the Jews!"*

From what has now been advanced, we should expect that Paganism had accomplished its work at *the fulness of time,* in the same manner and in the same degree as Israel had accomplished and made sure his calling and election: we should expect that *Religion* in the one case, and *science* and civilization in the other, would have reached that state of maturity, which would render the introduction of the new element comparatively easy amongst Jews and amongst Gentiles: we should expect that Pagan civilization would have reached that point, which in some measure would facilitate the spread of that Christian civilization, which was to penetrate the rude mass of mankind at large. We find that all this was the case; and these flowers of Paganism were not like those *religious blossoms,* which fall away and wither without bringing forth fruit! Pagan civilization brought forth much fruit, when it was incorporated into, brought under the influence of genuine Religion, and imbued with a Christian spirit. A thoroughly *Christian civilization* was the combined result of the dealings of God with Israel and the Gentile world.

When this preparation had been accomplished, the destiny of Israel and the destiny of the Pagan world, prior to the advent of Christ, was accomplished. Whatever remained of Judaism and Paganism had lost its character and its divine sanction. The times of the long-suffering of God respecting the Gentile world had expired; and ancient Paganism, as well as the ancient constitution of Israel, had fulfilled its purpose in the fulness of time. The Paganism which has existed since the advent of Christ is as much a caricature of ancient Paganism, as Judaism is a caricature of the Theocratical constitution of Israel. Both have become a dead carcase, without life and without meaning. Both are ruins of something comparatively far better. Hence the impotency of modern Paganism to produce anything similar to that ancient treasure of arts, sciences, and civilization, which Paganism had accumulated before the coming of Christ. When the merits of ancient Paganism have been frequently denied in this temporal point of view, it has been well meant, but it has been sadly used by ungodly writers as an argument against Christianity. When we hold fast the foregoing points, it will likewise appear plain why the favoured nation of the Jews were so far behind the accomplished Greeks in some material points. There is never a wasting of power in the providential kingdom of God. The polish of the Grecians was not obtained without the most strenuous efforts of every faculty; and even the infusion of a

religious spirit was requisite in order to do what they accomplished. The calling of Israel was of a far different character. Instead of feeling surprised that God should assign a minor task to the Gentile world, and favour its being accomplished, we must rather adore that infinite wisdom and goodness of God, who would even employ his *prodigal son* to do something laudable and useful, besides his being otherwise fitted for the reception of a spiritual salvation, which the Pagan world with all its wisdom could not produce.

Well, therefore, has the holy Augustine said, respecting the good which Paganism has effected, "*As the Egyptians had not only idols and heavy burdens, from which the Israelites fled with a feeling of abhorrence, but also precious jewels of silver and jewels of gold, and such things as they required, which they made use of for better purposes; even so have the doctrines of the Gentiles not only images and heavy and useless burdens, which must be abhorred by every Christian, but also liberal arts and sciences, which are fitted for the service of truth.*"

2. As every seed contains the hidden germs of the peculiar form and property of the plant, its leaves, flowers, and fruits, so we have deposited in every system of Religion, the peculiar moral influence which it will exercise upon its followers. If the Religion be sound and true, the morality of the religious system will be sound also. As the slightest motion with the sextant in our hand will vastly influence our calcu-

lation of the position of a given star, and as a single line may cause a miscalculation of thousands of miles, so misapprehension as to the fundamentals of Religion, although they may seem small in themselves, will yet influence the moral system in a most material degree. As the fountain, so are the waters; as the tree, even so is the fruit. To teach morals without engrafting religious principles, is to outstrip the folly of the gardener who hopes to destroy the noxious plants in his ground by cutting their branches. To inculcate moral precepts without imbuing the mind with the living principles of true Religion, from which they are to spring spontaneously, is acting the part of the stupid agriculturist, who, instead of removing the cause of marshy ground by draining the water, will rush forth, day by day, with threshing implements, and similar weapons, to dispel the unhealthy fogs, and to fight against the foul exhalations of the swamp, which poison the atmosphere.

Christianity administers moral precepts together with religious motives, but Paganism knows nothing of the latter. The Pagans, indeed, are not without a system of morality; for when "they by nature do the things contained in the law, which have not the law, they having not the law, are a law unto themselves." Those that have the law, and those that have not, are placed on a par in this respect so far, that each has a knowledge of the law, the one by revelation, the other by nature. The Gentiles are expected to do the things of the law which is written in their hearts,

their conscience bearing witness. Having a different standard, they will be judged accordingly in righteousness, and "perish without the law." But it is a very different thing what the Pagans ought to be, and what they actually are. We have already, on a former occasion, shown what the Religious systems of Pagans were intended to be, and what they actually were. As they were nothing but an expression of the moral state of the age in which they were founded, and of the individuals who were engaged in their fabrication, it was natural that whatever was considered to be desirable was conceived to be morally good; and whatever was incompatible with the laws of the country and the state of society, was considered to be morally wrong. As must be expected, large allowances would be made in such systems for the lust of the eye, and of the flesh, and for the pride of life.

Paganism, therefore, destroys the soul of duty, which is obedience to the Divine will, and conformity to the Divine command. There may exist an external rectitude independent of a written revelation, but our only standard can be conformity to Divine revelation. The Scriptures assure us, that with God nothing is acceptable which is not done under the influence of a sincere regard for his will. Where the single eye is wanting, the whole body walks in darkness. Men may do good, and accomplish great things, from self-interested and ambitious motives, and they may gain their reward in the applause of the world. As Pagan

philosophers recommended the virtues of temperance and moderation without regard to the Divine will, St. Augustine considers their virtues as splendid sins. God was not at all in their thoughts, as little in their virtues as he was in their vices.

The absence of every element of genuine morality in spurious Religions, cannot surprise us when we remember that they were formed and framed on purpose that man might indulge in his sins. Pagan nations expressed their virtues as well as their vices in the characters of their gods; and how should these depraved deities be able to elevate man to any moral greatness? The deity of Paganism naturally demands to be worshipped, reconciled, and appeased like man; and to do this it required more prudence than moral elevation.

As there is nothing so descriptive of the cause and the development of Paganism as that remarkable first chapter of St. Paul to the Romans, so it will ever stand unequalled in its description of the character of Pagan morality. The vivid picture which is there drawn by the hand of inspiration, is as terrifying as it appears true to life to every one acquainted with the moral state of ancient and modern Paganism. In diving into the mysteries of iniquity, we, like Ezekiel, turn and turn again, and at every turn we are shown still greater and greater abominations. There is in spurious Religion a perpetual action and reaction, vice generating idols and vicious deities, and deities encouraging and fostering vice.

The Christian cannot but associate in his mind Religion and morality, because both are related to one another as the cause and the effect, as the tree and the fruit. A religious man is considered to be a pious man, an individual of moral rectitude and principle. But Christian devotion would quench all the feelings of a Pagan piety; inasmuch as the Religion of the latter is far from being "*pure and undefiled.*" A man is unfit for the worship of an idolater, in proportion as the love and fear of God animates and inspires his soul. As Pagan deities have ever been cast in the mould of a depraved imagination, their worship partakes of the defects and vices of their worshippers: and as it behoves the worshipper to imitate the deity, there will always be sufficient motive and ample scope for the commission of all manner of moral depravity.

The writings of the Pagans, according to Justin Martyr, "tend to corrupt and deprave the minds of those who learn them; all taking pride in being imitators of their gods." Every individual will cleave to that peculiar deity whose character is most congenial to his own. Achilles, for instance, would emulate Mars in ferocity and deeds of blood. Ulysses would be like Mercury in stratagem and craft. The ambitious minds of Alexander the Great and Julius Cæsar, would act the part of Jupiter upon earth. There is not a vicious passion or crime, to which man may be tempted, for which the idolater may

not find a sanction or an example in the legends of his gods. The Pagan world being dependent for its moral examples and models of actions upon deities so corrupt, lascivious, adulterous, cruel, revengeful, bloodthirsty, hateful, envious, jealous, partial, angry, arbitrary, what could we better expect from their moral state than what is set forth by St. Paul in the first chapter of the Epistle to the Romans?

The impure services of the Babylonian, the Hindoo, the Grecian, the Egyptian, the Syrian, the Roman gods and goddesses, have ever hallowed vice, and raised the service of sin to the dignity of divine worship. And when Paganism has thus debased, darkened, and brutified the soul of man below the beasts that perish, can we wonder that the moral nature of man should sicken, droop, and die an unnatural death in so poisonous an atmosphere? Can we wonder when we behold idolaters with uplifted hands before their base divinities, imploring them to sweeten the most unnatural pleasures of sin, to aid them in their stratagems to poison their fellow-men, to crown with success their efforts to rob the poor widow, and to spoil the helpless orphan? So vile indeed were their petitions, that, according to the testimony of Seneca, they paused for very shame if they found themselves overheard by a fellow being.

There is a class of spurious Christians who, from ignorance of facts, consider that Paganism is misrepresented, and made to appear worse than it is.

To such, we might enlarge upon the abominable processions of ancient and modern Paganism, in which the worshippers rode upon donkeys, led about brute beasts, swallowed raw meat, danced like madmen, carried the symbols of abominable objects, and played with live serpents! We might speak of the dark and dreadful Eleusinian mysteries in honour of the goddess of lust. We might enlarge on the frantic orgies of the rites of Bacchus. We might speak of the fact of certain statues of notorious prostitutes having been made, to which, subsequently, divine worship was paid by the devotees. We might refer to the arguments of Aristotle, by which he admonished the government to prevent the exhibition of such religious statues and pictures, which were calculated to shock the feelings of the less corrupted of the nation. We might speak of the *motives* which induced Socrates to devote all his powers to the sculpture of the attired Graces. We might speak of the poets, who were chiefly the creators of the gods, and their representations of all that is bad and evil in the most fascinating and pleasing colours. We might enlarge upon the debasing character of most of their national songs, some of which were even condemned in Sparta. We might go into the theatre, and expose the abominable scenes and songs which were there applauded by the audience of the fair sex. We might speak of the most famous artists and sculptors of the gods, and the *circumstances* under which they were made the

arbiters of the charms and graces of female beauty. We might also feel compelled to speak of the things of which Plato declared that they were unnatural, and of such a base character, that even the beasts did not do the same. We might speak of those temples of ancient and modern Paganism, which resemble more the character of brothel-houses than places of public worship. We might dwell upon the circumstances under which the contests for beauty of form were conducted by the most civilized of Pagan nations. We might dwell upon the sacred rites of Religion, which in a most revolting form demanded the sacrifice of female virtue at Babylon, in Eastern India, in Egypt, in Phœnicia, in Cyprus, in Sicily, and in Greece. We might speak of still more heinous crimes and bestialities in the Pagan services. We might enter upon the details under which the youth contemplated a painting of Jupiter on the ceiling of the room, and ejaculated: "Ego homuncio hoc non facerem? Ego vero illud feci ac lubens." Were we writing chiefly for the apologists of Paganism, we should speak thus fully of these things in order to show its true character; but to avoid shocking the feelings of our general readers, we very gladly pass these depths of iniquity. If there remained any sober and serious persons among the Pagan nations, be it remembered that they were preserved only so far as they partially withstood the obnoxious influence of their Religion, which they were anxious to see banished

from the State. And we ascribe it to a noble repugnance to immorality, when a friend of Socrates, whose indignation was kindled against the abominable character of the Grecian divinities, and their corrupting influence upon the morals of the people, gave utterance to the words: "*So many honourable and excellent women has the goddess Aphrodite corrupted, that if I could catch her, I surely would transfix her with a spear!*"

Yet, notwitstanding such instances of heathens being superior to the standard of morality established among them, it is a melancholy fact that the better class not only committed things which betray an extraordinary corruption,—for this might be said, perhaps, of some of the noblest saints of the Bible,—but they in general considered morality far inferior to Philosophy. Suicide was commended by the morality of the Stoics; Aristotle sanctions revenge, and thinks that the pleasure resulting from virtue is the highest good; and even Plato approves of falsehood, as a wise means in the hands of government. To become like God is the highest object of man. But Plato nowhere says whether like Jupiter, or Venus, or the "*unknown God.*" Socrates declares virtue to be the object of all knowledge. But what was his standard of virtue? Wisdom, virtue, temperance, and fortitude, according to him, lead to righteousness; but it is not the righteousness acceptable with God. Virtue, happiness, and perfection are inseparable in his moral system. But it was

all fighting in the air. According to Antisthenes, man becomes a deity by loving what is beautiful and just. His successor, Theodorus, taught that prudence was identical with virtue. The whole moral code of Zeno embraced the cardinal virtues, sobriety, temperance, and righteousness; but how vague and unmeaning all these terms seem to be!

When the French nation, on the occasion of one of its revolutions, publicly denied the God who made, and the Saviour who redeemed them, they exhibited all the vices which a fallen nature is capable of committing. But with all the excess of wickedness which was then made manifest, they never could do what was done during the rule of Roman emperors. Emperors who fought amidst the gladiators before the people in a state of nudity; emperors who, like Caligula, converted their palaces into "houses of wickedness;" emperors who, like Nero, drove through the chief streets of the "eternal city" with a strumpet by their side; empresses like Messalina, who was a stain to the honour of her sex; emperors who, like Commodus, dishonoured and murdered their sisters; emperors who, like Heliogabalus, distributed the highest offices of the state for purposes of immorality, and gave to their concubines the possession of whole nations; and emperors, finally, who for their amusement superintended the murder of their fellow-creatures; who demolished bridges in order to have the pleasure of seeing a multitude of people perish in the

waves, or who set fire to the city, in order to witness a large conflagration;—such an awful demoralization could only gain ascendency amongst a people who have altogether turned aside, and become entirely destitute of the knowledge of the only true God, and the moral principles which he has implanted in human nature.

It is a pleasure for the Christian mind to retire from similar scenes of moral desolation; but it can be by no means altogether unprofitable for the Christian believer to reflect from time to time upon the abominations of Pagan idolatry. It will endear to our souls the blessed Gospel, which has delivered us from such a thraldom of corruption and darkness, and has enlightened the eyes of our understanding, that we know what is the hope of our calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints!

3. The ethics of Paganism have a baneful influence upon the moral nature of man. The manifold idolatries, the impure rites of heathen worship, the bad example of the deities, and the innate corruption of human nature, combined together to bring about that inveterate immorality which we witness in Pagan lands. The civil laws were, indeed, obliged to interfere and prescribe certain moral rules, but they could not substitute the divine standard which alone can be an authority in these matters. The civil law did, moreover, allow, and in some instances prescribe, things which are incompatible with the purity of

Religion and virtue. The same applies to the moral systems of Pagan philosophers; the best of them are deficient in material points of duty. But if we should ever find the moral precepts of Paganism perfect as to their demands, what could they profit man without being furnished with moral principles? When the love of God is shed abroad in his heart, man is enabled to overcome the love of sin, and the love of the things of this world. But love to God is something unknown to the spirit of Paganism; so much so, that the great philosopher, Aristotle, in his discourse upon morality, declared, "Friendship cannot subsist without a reciprocal feeling of affection. Such, however, cannot be the case with the Supreme Being; *and it would sound very strange if any one would venture to say that he loves Jupiter!*"

The Pagan world is dead in trespasses and sins; and the great object which Christianity alone could hope to accomplish, was its moral renovation and sanctification. In doing this, as we have already seen, it does not, as even the best of Pagan moralisers do, put a new piece of cloth upon an old garment. God reconciled the world unto himself, through his dear Son; and the spirit of the Gospel urges the children of God to be perfect as their "*Father in heaven is perfect;*" and to be "*followers of God as dear children.*" The love of God is shed abroad in the heart of a pardoned sinner, and "he that saith he abideth in him, ought himself also to

walk even as he walked." The keeping of his commandments, and the abiding in him, and the loving him who first loved us, are things which are never severed in the Bible. The end of the commandment is love, out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and faith unfeigned.

Christian morality restores the image of God in Christ Jesus, which is created in knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness. The fruits of the Spirit are love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. What a contrast to the picture of Pagan corruption, as described, Rom. i. 26—32! The virtues of Christianity qualify man for the joys of heaven; and as the Almighty cannot perform moral impossibilities, he cannot introduce into his presence those who are not qualified for it. The superiority of the Christian morality to every thing that Paganism has accomplished, has been acknowledged, even by those who are adverse to the spirit of Christianity. If it, however, be acknowledged that the system of Christian morality is superior to any other moral precepts, let it be remembered, that with it the superiority of the Christian Religion is likewise admitted; one necessarily implies the other. To admit the excellency of the spirit and the working of Christian morality, and to reject the Religion from which it flows, is equal to relishing the fruit of a certain tree, and condemning the tree as unprofitable. Such individuals enjoy the sweet waters,

but disapprove of the fountain from which they spring; they acknowledge the effects, but repudiate the cause which has produced them. Every tree being known by its fruits, and every Religion by its moral influence upon the world, we must abhor Paganism as an evil of the first magnitude.

4. Before we enter upon the consideration, as to what has been the influence of Paganism in a civil point of view, it will be necessary to make a few reflections upon the primal state of man. As in the religious and moral, so we observe also in every other department of intellectual and physical existence, an accelerated progress towards degeneracy. Before the fall of man, all was intended to advance to higher and greater perfection. Man, in his primitive state, was moving towards a definite perfection with the whole creation around him; after the fall, all was tending towards a general degeneracy. The savage state, far from being the primeval condition of man, is, in every point of view, a melancholy degeneracy from one more cultivated, and more elevated. All sound philosophy, in harmony with profane and sacred history, points emphatically to this conclusion. Now, as the simple child becomes an intelligent man only by his living together with other men, so man, again, attains a certain polish and civilization by his intercourse with other beings of the same species. As mankind did not always exist in a large body, the first men were naturally to derive their education and culture of mind

from God himself; there must have been a time when God introduced man into his present circumstances. When man fell, it was certainly a most serious interruption to his onward progress towards perfection. But we must at the same time suppose, that man brought great and uncommon powers from his primitive into his fallen state. If this were otherwise, how could we account for the very important phenomena in the primal history of our race? Whence that early proficiency in astronomy, in mathematics, in natural philosophy, in architecture, and similar accomplishments, among the Chaldeans, Egyptians, Chinese, and Hindoos? If the primitive nations were mere animals and savage barbarians, whence the fact, that the states, the manners, the arts and sciences which existed among them, were all founded upon Religion, and that religious *worship* was the whole centre of gravity in their existence? Well, therefore, said the famous antiquary Ouwaroff, "L'état naturel de l'homme n'est ni l'état sauvage ni l'état de corruption, c'est un état simple, meilleur, plus rapproché de la divinité; l'homme sauvage et l'homme corrumpu en sont également éloignés." The history of man represents the bright and terrible image, which in the dream of Nebuchadnezzar had a *head of fine gold; his breast and his arms were of silver; his belly and thighs of brass; his legs of iron;* and last, *his feet were part of iron and part of clay.* The further we descend from the fountain-head above, the more de-

generated are the elements of which it is composed. Hence the idea of the golden, silver, brass, and iron ages. The blessings of art were ascribed by Plato to a revelation bestowed by the Deity upon our forefathers, by whom it was handed down to posterity.

The degeneracy was not instantaneous; but the transition from better to worse, or from good to evil, was effected in some instances by such insensible degrees as to be almost imperceptible within limited periods. In other cases it was arrested by extraordinary causes, as was the fact in the history of the people of God. It is however worthy of remark, that the most melancholy extent of civil degeneracy to a state of barbarism, and the melancholy extremes of Pagan superstition, have invariably kept pace together. The religious and civil degeneracy synchronised so completely throughout the historical development of both processes, that we may infer the state of civilization or barbarism from the state of the Religion of a certain nation; and from the features of the barbarism or civilization of a people we may safely argue as to the leading features of their religious belief.

The root of all civilization is Religion, without reference to its genuine or spurious character. "La religion est le fond de toute civilisation naissante, et en particulier de celle de l'Inde." (Cousin.) If the Religion be spurious, its civilization will partake of the same character. If the Religion be genuine, the civilization will be genuine also. As the Grecian Mythology was one

of the noblest branches of Paganism, it was amongst others best fitted to advance the culture of the human mind, and to encourage the fine arts. But we find that, having no root, it withered and died away. The most ancient civilization was connected with temples, priests, and divine worship. If we look at civilization amongst Pagan nations, we find that Paganism was by no means calculated to polish the tribes of the earth, although we have acknowledged that before the advent of Christ there was more accomplished by Pagan nations than amongst Israel, in that peculiar department. The central points of Paganism and Pagan civilization in the West, were Egypt, Greece, and Rome. When it was to be communicated to other nations from them, it became soon visible how ill-adapted these systems of Religion were to civilize the world. Being intimately connected with the national character of the people, with the nature of their country, the propagation of their Religion was the propagation at the same time of all the national peculiarities of the people. The nations converted were actually made Egyptians or Grecians, as the case might be, instead of becoming simply worshippers of certain deities.

Thus, for instance, Nubia and Abyssinia received with the Egyptian Religion also Egyptian manners and peculiarities. Thus, again, Thracia, Macedonia, and Lower Italy, received with the Grecian Religion also a Grecian character. Grecian Religion and Grecian sciences were introduced in Rome at a later period of

its history. Again, Gallia and Spain were Romanized, as far as they were brought under the influence of the Roman Mythology. This was ever the case with the chosen people of God, as long as their Religion was of a national and not of a universal character, because it was intimately interwoven with the national institutions. The Idumeans, and afterwards many of the Syrians and Greeks, who received the Jewish Religion, were made *Jews* in every point of view.

The idea that all nations should embrace one mode of worship was, therefore, considered a fantastical idea by the ancient philosophers. Celsus exclaims: "*Whoever can fancy that Greeks and barbarians in Asia, Europe, and Lybia shall ever agree in one and the same Religion, must be a fool!*" Christianity alone could accomplish the universal civilization of the world without injury to the national characters of the several tribes of mankind. Instead of bringing dead formalities, usages, and precepts of a national character before the people, it was heavenly seed which was planted in the heart of humanity; it grew up and brought forth much fruit. The civil, social, and national peculiarities were not destroyed, but renovated and ennobled.

What would have become of the wild hordes of the Huns and Vandals which emigrated from the East into Europe, if they had been cast into the dead forms of Roman Paganism, instead of being brought under the influence of the Gospel? Whilst Rome was at

that period weak and imbecile in the extreme, China was, comparatively speaking, in its most flourishing state when the Mantchoo tribes entered the country; yet we cannot discover that the Chinese Religion has infused that spirit of life into the rude mass of emigrants which was produced amongst the wild Huns and Vandals by the Christian Religion. The former were enslaved by the same dead forms of Religion by which the Chinese themselves were and still are fettered down. Both are in the same predicament, and are afflicted with the same infirmity. The effect which Christianity produced among the Huns and Vandals has become visible since that time in innumerable instances. How salutary has been the effect of Christian influence upon the most common relations of life! To give one instance only from the days of the primitive Church; what was there more despised amongst the ancients than the profession of an inn-keeper; so much so, that the word *cauponare* was used to express the dishonest adulteration of a thing. But the inn-keeper, Theodotus of Ancyra, in Galatia, who died a martyr, sufficiently showed that even the profession of an inn-keeper, infamous as it was considered, could be redeemed from its evil character by the influence of Christianity. The inn of Theodotus was a place of refuge, and a place of worship too, for the persecuted Christians. His biographer likens it, as a refuge in the storm of persecution, to the ark of Noah!

All real civilization is necessarily of religious origin; man, as a dependent creature, can advance only under the immediate influence of a higher religious principle. Now, Pagan systems of belief can no more ennoble the faculties of man, than they can satisfy his intellectual powers. They could never stand even before the tribunal of reason in its fallen condition. Hence they always withered and perished as soon as otherwise feeble philosophical speculations tested their reality. The Western systems of belief decayed as soon as Philosophy had sprung up, and, in the end, they perished. The Oriental systems of belief fell into a state of relaxation; and whilst the dead forms maintained a position among the vulgar mass, the educated class of society had an esoteric creed of unbelief and Atheism. The Christian Religion, on the contrary, being the highest Philosophy, satisfies not only the wants of the less educated class of people, and rouses those reasoning faculties which have been lying dormant; but it opens to the intelligent believer depths of divine wisdom which satisfy his mind, and, moreover, pass all his understanding. Respecting the effects of the Gospel upon the intellect and lives of the common people, the defenders of our holy faith declared in the first centuries: "Every Christian tradesman who has found God, can show respecting him all that can be desired, although Plato declares it to be difficult to find the Creator of all things, and considers it to be impossible to make him known to all after he

has been found." Again; "With us you will find untaught people, artisans, and old women, who clearly demonstrate the truth of their Religion, if not by words, yet by their works exhibiting the salutary effects of their sentiments. They do not, indeed, commit words to their memories, but by not striking again when they are struck, by giving to those that need, and by loving their neighbours as themselves, they show it by good works." It was their motto, "Non loqui magna, sed vivere." Respecting the character of the Gospel, and its relation to human intellect in its polished and enlightened state, what St. Paul declared will ever be true: "Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought; but we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory." (1 Cor. ii. 6, 7.) Hence the most acute philosophers of the West and the profoundest thinkers of the East have found light, comfort, peace, and satisfaction, when they sought it in the appointed way. Christ is both the light of our intellect and the life of our hearts. But, in order to be the former, he must first become the latter.

It was, therefore, in vain that Infidelity attempted to shake the pillars of divine truth. Porphyry and Julian, Toland and Bolingbroke, Hume and Gibbon, Voltaire and D'Alembert, and a host of others, have departed; *but Christ is the same yesterday, and to-day,*

and for ever! Christianity, as regards its salutary effects upon the world, has outlived the scoffing Gentile, with all the host of French, German, and English infidels; and when it seemed well nigh swallowed up, it raised its head with new-born strength to bless the nations of the earth!

5. If we regard the *social influence of Paganism* upon the world, we find that it directly destroys the natural affections, and debases man to the level of beasts that perish. Whilst genuine Religion refines, ennobles, and purifies every feeling of our nature, and produces a sound and healthy action of its powers, Paganism has at all times tended to brutify every faculty of our nature. This is exactly what we should expect. In what other creed besides the Christian Religion has *woman* assumed the position in society which God designed for her at the time of creation?

The fearful degradation of the female sex all over the world, and throughout all the ages of its history, has become too notorious to require any detailed account. Because Paganism is destitute of that lofty view which genuine Religion only could reveal, she is generally regarded as a mere slave, to minister to the comforts and the pleasure of her lord and master. Christianity alone could bring to perfection the germs which were already deposited in the Old Testament, by teaching man to view these connexions in their momentous bearing upon eternity. If we descend to the ossified system of Rabbinical Judaism, we hear the Jew in the

performance of his morning orison exclaiming, "*I praise thee, O Lord, Creator of heaven and earth, that* THOU HAST NOT MADE ME A WOMAN!" Whilst the woman is reminded of her low estate in a prayer of her own, in which she is taught to say, "*Be thou praised, O God, that thou hast created me as it was pleasing in thy sight!*" He that teaches the law to his daughter is a *fool*, according to the Talmud! The court of women was significantly joined to the court of the Gentiles. If such be the case in modern Judaism, what are we to expect from the Pagan world! And if that great prince of philosophers, Aristotle, declared, concerning these tender portions of our species, that they were a "*kind of monsters, and the beginning of a degeneracy in our nature,*" what must we dread to find amongst those Pagans who are altogether strangers to higher views and nobler feelings! Christianity *alone* had the power to break the chain and to remove the curse, by which not God, but man himself, had laden her in the process of time! And in this her new position she was a wonder in the primitive days of the Church.

Tertullian thus describes the happiness of a Christian couple: "What a communion of two believers, who have but one hope and one object of all their wishes! They have one doctrine and serve one common Lord. There is a communion of the spirit, as there is one of the body; they are one spirit and one flesh. They read the Holy Scriptures together, they

pray together; they instruct, admonish, and bear with one another; they partake of the Lord's Supper together in the church; they share mutually in the distress, in the persecution, and in the joys of life; nothing is hidden from each other; neither avoids the other, neither is burdensome to the other; each is at liberty to visit the sick and to support the poor. Psalms and hymns are sung by both, and they vie with each other as to who can give most praise unto God. Christ rejoices in hearing and observing these things; and he it is who gives them peace. Where thus two are found in his name, he is in the midst of them; and where he is, the wicked one cannot abide."

Polygamy is, strictly speaking, the offspring of irreligion and Paganism; and holy Scripture considers it an unnatural state of things. A man will forsake his father and mother, and cleave to his wife, and they both shall be one flesh. Good men, such as Abraham, David, and Solomon, are represented as having suffered great injury from the practice which they borrowed from the ungodly; it was always a source of vexation to their domestic comfort, and not unfrequently, a cause of still greater crime and misery. If polygamy were founded in the nature of man, God would have given unto man, whom he created in a happy state, more than one wife. Again, there being not more women than men in the world, polygamy would render it impossible for many men to procure wives.

Those who defend polygamy as allowable in certain climates, ought also to bring forward proofs of God having fitted the moral wants of the women of these countries to such marriages. If it were in accordance with the nature of man to possess several wives, then would there also be such an organization of the female heart, as to enable several wives cheerfully to divide among themselves the affections of one man. We, however, observe the contrary, even where for a succession of years manners and customs have done all they could to blunt domestic feelings. Jealousy has always most dreadfully tormented and torn to pieces the hearts of wives, so that even those of the pseudo-prophet Mohammed could not free themselves from it, notwithstanding the notion of the happiness consequent upon so intimate a connexion with an "ambassador" of God.

In all the arrangements of Nature we discover the most beautiful harmony; and is it likely that we should find her in this respect evidently contradicting herself? Can we imagine that she would have implanted in the constitution of man the physical want of possessing several wives, and in woman the moral want of possessing one man only? We are rather compelled to look upon polygamy as contrary to nature, which is further evident from the fact, that polygamy does away with, or leaves scarcely a shadow behind of, spiritual love in the marriage state. The external part of marriage is altogether the ruling one in polygamy; this,

again, is very significant in the religion of Islam and other systems of spurious Religion. Christianity is a spiritual Religion, and the spirit of genuine Religion only could bring marriage back into the sphere of the Spirit. As the external and the internal parts are essential to a sound definition of the Church of Christ; and as all that is external in the Church is only the image, the expression, or the visible organ of the internal, and never can be self-existing, or possess any great value of its own,—so also in marriage. This sacred institution has not merely a spiritual character or appearance; so the invisible Church cannot exist without the visible. The spiritual, however, must be the principal and ruling element, and a mere physical union establishes a very different relation to what is established by matrimonial affection. How can matrimonial love be thought of amongst people given to polygamy, since the former demands a giving up of each party wholly and indivisibly to the other. With polygamists, the wife is considered a commodity, an instrument, a slave; and that this is their view upon the subject is proved in the most striking manner by the poor possessing but one wife, just as he possesses few articles of luxury; whereas the number of wives increases with the increase of riches.

Now, if from these observations it is evident that nature, which forms the poor as well as the rich according to the same laws, does not require polygamy, the want of faith in that truth, which is the

basis of genuine Religion, which has alone made known to man the true worth of his species, and which prohibits the use of fellow-men for selfish purposes, becomes equally apparent in the defenders of polygamy.

It has been gravely asserted by writers upon the Mohammedan creed, that, according to the teaching of the Koran, women have no souls! That the Mohammedan creed, however, teaches such doctrines is very far from the truth. But what has the poor woman gained if she is permitted the privilege of claiming an immortal soul, when she is otherwise treated as a *soulless* being, as a piece of property, which the thief hides in a dark corner of the house? The wives of the Mohammedans are actually stolen from the world, and from general society; and the woman herself is deprived, if not of a soul, yet of everything which is calculated to ennoble that soul, and to sanctify it for the indwelling of the Holy Ghost. Let the civilized people of this country imagine the melancholy case of woman being banished from their general society, from their religious and social assemblies! But although Christian men have both the calling and the strength to be holy in all things, and to enjoy the good gifts of a heavenly Father without abuse, they yet remember that to marry and to be given in marriage belongs to this passing world, and to the things thereof; and so far from looking with Mohammed for similar things in the world to come, they consider it as part of the travelling attire, which they hope to lay aside when they

enter into the joy of their Lord, and are as the angels of heaven!

To the uncivilized Pagan, *physical power*, and to the more refined Pagan a political career, was the most important of all things, and for both these things the tender sex was disqualified by nature. Hence women lost all importance in society. As from them was dreaded every evil, and as they were suspected at every turn of life, they were restrained to a life of private seclusion. Unmarried women were kept in apartments which were secured with locks and bars; nor could they move from this one part of the house without permission, being guarded by old female servants and eunuchs. By this restrained mode of treatment, the woman was deprived of every opportunity of cultivating those feelings of tenderness, and those graces, which constitute the most powerful of her charms. No wonder that there were, under these circumstances, enemies to the conjugal life. As marriage was a mere *civil act*, no considerations but those of a civil and political nature were to influence the choice of a wife. Lycurgus, from political motives, could not suffer old bachelors. As a punishment, they were to be brought every winter in a state of nudity to the market place, where they were obliged to sing songs in derision of the dishonourable condition of an old bachelor! And, amongst other things, they were to be dragged by women on a certain festival round the altar, and beaten with fists! A marriage which was

forced by means similar to these could indeed have little of that tenderness and affection which constitute a never failing source of conjugal bliss and happiness.

Whilst we find Socrates and Plutarch to entertain higher ideas of the female sex, and of their position in married life, Plato, again, has sadly miscalculated their real dignity and worth. But even when the Pagans had some better ideas, how sadly did they fall behind what matrimony is shown to be according to the spirit of the gospel. The Pagan world is entirely destitute of the spiritual principle of unity. It is only when Christ becomes the common centre of the mutual affections of husband and wife, that conjugal life receives a heavenly and a priestly character.

Another stain in the social character of the Pagan world was *Slavery;* which was likewise discountenanced by genuine Religion from the commencement, and was openly disavowed by the principles of Christianity. It is necessary to a civil body that there should exist different classes of people. But never can it be a sound state, when one part is considered to have only rights without duties, and the other to have only duties without rights. The servant is to be bound to his master, not by force, but by affection and fidelity. The condition of a slave makes him as it were a creature of an inferior species and kind; and the dignity of man is insulted. If we are willing to admit, from an extended observation, that slavery in some instances is not attended by any inhuman severity, yet it cannot be

denied that it is directly opposed to the rights and the dignities of our species, and that it has occasioned the most shameful, abominable, and, at the same time, the most inhuman spectacles which can be witnessed under the sun.

Without referring to the modern state of slavery and its consequences, let us again recur to the most refined of Pagan nations. Let us look at the Helotes in Sparta. A poor garment, and a cap from the skin of a dog, were the distinguishing marks of his caste. Those that promised to become too corpulent, were to be ill-used by their masters to reduce their strength; and when it was omitted, the masters became subject to the law and its punishment. Every slave received annually a certain number of lashes, to remind him of his low estate. How different the custom of the first Christians, who recognised in the Christian slaves their brethren, and were not ashamed to greet them, after the Lord's supper, with "*an holy kiss!*" That, however, they were not to forget their position amidst all the tenderness of their masters, may be gathered from the words of Bishop Ignatius, which he wrote to Polycarp: "Despise not the slaves; they are, however, not to be made proud, but serve more zealously to the honour of God, in order to obtain from God the true liberty. They are *not to seek* to be bought free by the congregation, lest they show themselves to be the slaves of worldly desires!"

It was not permitted that slaves should sing any of

the nobler national songs. Sometimes they were forced to sing songs, which were composed in derision of their slavery. In order to make drunkenness hateful to the sons of Sparta, they were obliged to intoxicate themselves at public festivities. If they increased too much in numbers, they were murdered in secret. Once in a year the young men of Sparta were to hunt them like so many wild beasts. If the treatment of the slaves was less cruel in some respects in other parts of polished Greece, their condition was not the less degrading and dishonouring. They were used for the vilest of purposes. Solon himself had sent a number of female slaves to the temples for disreputable purposes. If brought before the bar, their evidence was always drawn forth with the most fearful tortures.

Almost equally insupportable was the condition of the slaves among the civilized Romans. Some of the Roman slaves, the *Ostiarii*, were continually lying in chains, like dogs, before the palaces of the great. One of the laws was, that if the master was murdered, and the person who perpetrated the deed could not be discovered, all the slaves, with their wives and children, should be killed. When Pedanius Secundus was murdered, four hundred innocent slaves lost their lives. Slaves were generally considered not as persons, but as goods and chattels.

The same Cato who made such an honourable distinction in his views respecting other social relations

in life, was in this respect no better than his countrymen. And there is much soundness in some of the expressions of which Plutarch makes use respecting the conduct of Cato in this instance. He saith, "We must give a much wider scope to charity than to justice; and I must ascribe it to a great hardness on the part of Cato, that he considers man to stand in no other relation to his fellow-creatures than that of profit; or else how could he drive his slaves to the market in their old days, after they had served him all their lives? We must deal according to law and justice with men; but benevolence in some instances, like a bountiful fountain, overflows in charity and kindness even to brute beasts. It is from a principle of benevolence that horses are fed which are incapacitated for labour, and dogs are also nursed in their old days. We are not to use live creatures as we make use of our shoes and our furniture, which are instantly thrown aside when they have become unprofitable; but we are to exercise a mild and tender spirit, in order to learn charity towards men. I, at least, would not sell an ox who had become old in my service, much less would I sell an old slave for a few pieces of money, who has grown up with me, and become useless to the seller and the purchaser." Thus far the noble-minded Plutarch. We shall omit to multiply instances of Roman cruelty after what has been said of one of its best citizens.

What a pleasing contrast to the above we observe

already under the first Christian Emperor of the Roman empire, when the emancipation of single slaves according to law was to be announced by the bishop in the church! Every one will observe that to appreciate the real worth of man is purely a Christian idea. The *abolition of slavery* was a Christian movement. And as we find exactly the contrary of these benevolent laws amongst people that profess spurious systems of belief, we clearly see that the difference must arise from the belief which teaches the sublime truth—God became man to redeem the world! And before this mystery was fully revealed and felt in the hearts of men, no sound notions of the dignity of humanity were entertained. A most singular constitution must have been given to the human mind, if that which is considered error by some people should exert such influence as what to them seems truth has never exerted. Only truth can produce such glorious, lasting, and deep effects!

Paganism in its general working blunts not only the dearest and strongest ties which bind man to man, but it deprives man of his humanity. Murder of fellow-creatures has been made the gratification of the amphitheatre among some of the most polished nations. We are informed that the inhabitants of the South Sea islands have been known to pierce their aged parents with a spear when wearied of waiting upon them. In other cases, the father has been carried, under the pretence of taking him to bathe, to a grave.

previously prepared, and buried alive. The inhabitants of Sumatra, when weak and infirm, were customarily devoured by their own children. The individual to be consumed ascended a tree, around which the friends and offspring assembled. The latter, whilst shaking the tree, chanted a funeral tune, the import of which was, "*The fruit is ripe, and the season is come, when it must fall!*" Upon his descending, the nearest relatives took the life and devoured the remains of the unhappy parent at a solemn banquet!

Cannibalism has been abolished in every island of the Pacific Ocean. But New Caledonia was in 1848 still one of the dark places of the earth, full of the habitations of cruelty. At a festival then held, the subjects appeared before their chief. Amongst them was a very corpulent man, for whom the son of the chief, about six years of age, asked his father. When the latter inquired whether the man should be killed, the boy answered, "*Let him be cut in pieces alive!*" The arms were first cut off, then the legs, then the head! These were people of the same blood, of the same country, and of the same tribe. How different the occasion for that exclamation of the Pagans in the first centuries: "*Behold, how they love one another, and how ready to die for one another!*"

And what were the practices of Pagans respecting their dead? The wives and the servants of the Goths were made to follow their deceased husbands and

masters by a cruel death. The ancient Scythians destroyed upon the tombs of their kings the best beloved of their wives and concubines, together with other persons who had acquired some merit during their reign! A sad recompense for services rendered to the state! A year after were killed fifty horses and as many of the domestics of the departed sovereign. There are many Negro tribes who slaughter from two hundred to five hundred concubines and slaves near the sepulchre of a chief: and in order to secure them, they are frequently seized before he dies, lest they should escape: sometimes their limbs are broken, and they are thus exposed till they die. Amongst the Dahomes these slaughters are repeated every year, when from forty to fifty slaves are sacrificed. With the bodies of the kings of Mexico and Peru were burned or buried, treasures, clothes, servants, and sometimes the dearest of brothers. The princes of the Franças thought they could not be buried decently, and appear in the other world, unless the first of their wives, and the chief of their servants, and at least twenty of their subjects, accompanied them. In North America it was the custom to torture captives to death, and to call upon their fallen heroes to come and to drink the blood of their enemies. Alexander the Great slaughtered upon his father's tomb all those who were in any way privy to his murder. Even the ancient Romans, too, were followed by the slaves, who were killed upon their tombs. The first wife of

the Tuitunga, in the South Seas, is to die immediately after her husband.

In order, however, to breathe again more freely, let us come forth from these abominable recesses of Pagan ignorance and cruelty, and refresh our souls by looking into the Church which God hath planted in this evil world. In one of the epistolary charges of Bishop Dionysius to his Egyptian congregations, he writes, amongst other things, with reference to a fearful plague, that many of his brethren sacrificed their lives in the service of brotherly love and charity; in which they cared not for themselves, but attended upon the sick without intermission; that not a few died in consequence of the diligence by which others recovered; that some of their best priests and deacons, as well as laymen, thus in faith and piety left this world in a manner which was little inferior to the death of their martyrs; that those who shut the eyes and the mouths of dying Christians, and interred their remains in a most affectionate manner, were likewise soon gathered to their rest; and that all these things were done whilst the Gentiles fled from their dearest relatives, and cast them half-dead into the streets.

Respecting their feelings as regards those that died in faith, Tertullian says: "We shall once again be the more intimately re-united; being destined for a more perfect state of things, we shall rise again to a more spiritual communion; we shall recognise ourselves, as

well as those that belong to us. How should we be able to praise God in eternity, if our recollection of what we owe to him should not remain? We shall be with God, and therefore we shall also be together, inasmuch as we shall all be *one* in him." That Christianity did never suppress the bitter feelings of separation, but that it modified his natural grief, by teaching the believer to consider death but a sleep, will appear from the manner in which Christians of all ages remember their departed relatives and friends. There is no voluntary or involuntary slaughter upon their tombs! They know that their communion is one which is founded for eternity, and which cannot be broken by the power of death. They are conscious of this union all the days of their lives. In their prayers they feel that they stand in connexion with the spirits of the just made perfect. With similar feelings the primitive Christians celebrated the days of the death of their beloved as "*birth-days*" unto life eternal. They particularly celebrated on these days the Lord's Supper, in the consciousness that they were united to the Lord, and in him also to those that are with him already; and particular mention was made in the Liturgy for this sacred occasion, of their *communion* with the glorified saints, saying: "And we also bless thy holy Name for all thy servants departed this life in thy faith and fear; beseeching thee to give us grace so to follow their good examples, that with them we may be partakers of thy heavenly

kingdom. Grant this, O Father, for Jesus Christ's sake, our only Mediator and Advocate. Amen."

It has been remarked by a modern Continental writer: "*It can only be ascribed to* IGNORANCE, *that some consider the Christian Religion a Religion of love in contradistinction to all other creeds! The Hindoo Religion much rather deserves to be styled by that distinguished appellation, inasmuch as charity is extended even to the brute creation, a provision which has been neglected in the Christian revelation.*" We know not whether this writer is more ignorant of the principles of the Christian Religion, or of the tenets and practices of the Hindoo Mythology. As regards the charity of the Hindoo towards animals, it will be remembered that it is without any moral foundation whatever, and is solely supported by the gross superstitious doctrine of the transmigration of the soul.

Again, although the Hindoo is ignorant whether he does or does not drive about his deceased father, or his wife, or his grandfather, or his child, in the body of his cattle, he yet is too indifferent to bring in a sufficient quantity of hay from the mountain after the rainy season; and the consequence is, that all the cattle of the Hindoos are reduced to mere skeletons before the rains again commence. As the road between Cairo and Suez was lined, some years ago, with the skeletons of dead camels, so are the mountainous passages in India lined with the skeletons of sacred bullocks, which the *charitable* Hindoo killed,

by overloading them with rice and other articles of merchandise!

Again, how vehemently does the charge of *ignorance* return upon the head of that writer, when we recollect, that whilst the Hindoo builds hospitals for *old cows*, he throws *his children* and his *parents alive into the river, and burns his unhappy widows upon the funeral pile*, wherever he is not prevented by civil force from perpetrating these crimes in the name of Religion! And the eulogy of the said author would, perhaps, have been less warm upon the subject, had he ever witnessed the frequent spectacle of a holy cow lying for a couple of days sick, in the vicinity of the house of the owner, and near the high-road, whilst the dogs, and the crows, and the vultures, and other carnivorous creatures, fed upon the ill-fated animal *alive!* Is this a *Religion of love*, which makes a "*righteous man to be merciful even to his beast?*" Is this "the beautiful and radiant cherub from heaven, bearing on his persuasive lips the accents of pardon and peace, and on his silken wings satisfaction and blessing," to the creature which was subject to vanity, and groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now?

When the faithful Hindoo is carried to the sacred stream in his last agony, he is brought thither with a view of being tormented to death by the superstitious and cruel ceremonies of his Religion. When perhaps the individual might have recovered under the care of

filial affection, the dissolution is accelerated, whilst they cover the body of the patient with sacred *mud,* write upon it the name of some deity, and pour water down his throat! But if a person chance to revive, and to escape the murderous treatment of his nearest relatives, he is nevertheless a *dead man* in the eye of the Hindoo law! His property is transferred to his heir, he himself becomes an outcast, his own children refuse to eat with him again, or to afford him any accommodation. A certain man was carried to the funeral pile under the impression that he died from cholera. He, however, revived, when a near relative, who was to perform the ceremony of burning his remains, struck him with a bamboo upon the head until he died! When another took hold upon a boat, which descended the river, with a view to escape being drowned after he was brought to die in the river, the individuals in the boat knocked down his hands, and prevented him from being saved.

In the year 251, A.D., a fearful plague raged in the Roman empire, especially in the North of Africa. The Pagans of Carthage did not venture to attend to their fellow Pagans who were seized with this malady: and many were thrown half-dead into the streets. The dead bodies remained in heaps, and a *universal* pestilence threatened to be the consequence if they were not interred. Just before this plague the Christians had passed through a severe persecution, and the calamity itself caused fresh attempts upon them, as if

the gods had brought this judgment upon them on account of their enemies the Christians. But the noble Bishop Cyprian knew well that it was a Christian duty to heap coals of fire upon the heads of their enemies by well-doing. He gathered his humble flock around him, and said: "If we only do good to those that belong to us, we do nothing more than 'the publicans and the Gentiles;' we must, as Christians, overcome evil by good, and love our enemies, as our Lord has commanded; we are to pray for those that persecute us. As we are born of God, we must be followers of this our heavenly Father; and we are to show ourselves worthy of his goodness by so doing." The Christians dispersed, and by their combined efforts the dead were buried, and the impending danger was removed!

At Gango Sagor many a woman had forgotten the "son of her womb," where they were accustomed to throw from their bosom the innocent infant into the water, in fulfilment of some solemn vow. And they considered the sacrifice not propitious, unless a shark, or some other monster of the deep, swallowed it before their eyes! The burning alive of the widows with the corpses of their deceased husbands would still be in force, had not a Christian government prohibited the custom. The registers of 1815—1824 testify that in the Bengal Presidency alone five thousand nine hundred and ninety-seven unhappy widows were thus burned alive. There are still parts of India which are beyond

the influence of the government of Great Britain, in which these crimes are continued; and if the English were now to withdraw from that mighty empire, the funeral piles of the widows would be lighted again in an instant!

Infanticide was, and is still, a crime as widely extended as Pagan influence has poisoned the moral atmosphere. Some few instances do, indeed, occasionally occur within the boundary of the visible church, but that it is according to the spirit of the Gospel no one will believe. The Israelites of old now and then adopted it from the Pagans amongst whom they lived. (Isaiah lvii. Jer. ii. xix. Ezek. xvi. 2 Kings xvii.)

Amongst the savage Americans numerous children are annually destroyed by the parents; and among the Choctaws the mothers sometimes dig the grave before their birth, to bury them alive as soon as they are born! Sometimes death is produced by their stamping upon the breast of the infant; sometimes they strangle it, or knock it upon the head. In some countries the trouble and expense of bringing them up is alleged as a sufficient cause for their destruction; whilst those Pagan nations that are in the habit of destroying their female offspring, ascribe their custom either to the uselessness of daughters, or to the fear that, from remaining unmarried, or marrying below their expectations, they should in any way be the means of dishonouring their family.

There have, however, been cases in which infanticide

was sanctioned by law in some instances, and in others it was commanded. The Athenians and the Gauls were empowered to destroy their children. The lawgiver of Sparta obliged the father to bring the new-born son before an examining committee, who were to view the child. If the child was found deformed, or of a weakly constitution, he was cast into a deep cavern, near the mountain Taygetus, as the council thought it neither good for the State nor for the child that he should be brought up! Even Aristotle declared in his writings concerning the State, that it was necessary in certain cases to destroy the embryo, and to expose weak and sickly children, with a view to prevent the too rapid increase of the number of citizens. What a contrast to the Foundling Asylums which Christian charity has instituted, to receive the infants which are exposed by semi-pagan parents!

As the civil and political virtues were the distinguishing features of Roman and Grecian Religion, the unnatural disregard to children not qualified for that purpose, as well as for women, who could not distinguish themselves in that sphere, was a necessary consequence. The laws of Romulus endowed the Romans with unlimited power over the lives of their children; and, according to Tertullian, they exposed their sons, drowned them, or allowed them otherwise to perish by famine, or by dogs. How truly may it be said, that Greece produced distinguished Grecians, and that Rome produced eminent Romans; but that in the

most flourishing periods of their respective histories, they could never raise themselves to the dignity of *men!*

Previous to the spread of Islam in Arabia, the Arabs are declared to have been addicted to the destruction of their female infants. They buried them alive, lest their families should be reduced to poverty by providing for them; also to avoid the disgrace which would befall them, should they happen to be made captives, or become scandalous in their conduct. For these reasons, the birth of a daughter was considered a great misfortune. Up to the present day, whilst the birth of a male child occasions a general shooting and shouting amongst the Arabs, and the inhabitants of the Eastern shores of Africa, the author observed a dead silence if, on the other hand, an "*insignificant female infant*" was born into the world.

Until put down lately by the salutary influence of Christianity, the unnatural custom of destroying female infants in the above manner prevailed to a dreadful extent among the South Sea Islanders—scarcely a third of the children which were born being brought up; and instances are related of mothers having successively destroyed from six to eight children. An old chief of Otaheite made the following confession after his conversion to Christianity: "Great was my family, but I only am left. All my children died in the service of the devil. They knew not the *good word*, which I am preserved to see. My heart longs after

them, and often reproaches me as to their early and untimely end. Great and many are my crimes. I have been the father of nineteen children, but I became likewise their murderer! Now my soul desires after them. If they had been spared, they would now be men and women, and would have learned to know the word of the true God. But when I murdered them, there was none to prevent my hand, none to say unto me, *Spare thy children!* None there was to tell me: The good word, the true word is come, *Spare thy children!* And now my heart yearns after them, and weeps over them!"

In China it is stated to be a very common thing to destroy female infants, with a view to save the trouble of bringing them up; and that in some families as many as five or six daughters are smothered. These facts are too notorious to require any particulars.

The practice prevails among several tribes of the peninsula of Hindostan, and it is too probable that, owing to the privacy of the native houses and the concealment of their women, it is carried to a far greater extent than is generally known. It is notorious that it was openly done among the Rajkumar, and the Rajawansa tribes, near Benares; among the Jadeja, and the Jatwa Rajputs, in Kutch and Katiawad; among the Rhatores of Jaipoor and Jaudpoor, as well as amongst the Jaut tribes of Hindostan: all of whom destroyed, and partly yet destroy, their female offspring, from avarice and from pride. British

philanthropy has been beneficially exerted towards the suppression of these black crimes, which, under the degrading influence of Pagan idolatry, the history of our race discloses.

In the northern parts of Bengal, the horrid custom is said to prevail, that if an infant refuse the mother's food, and decline in health, the mother fancies that it is under the malignant influence of some demon: she places the child in a basket, and hangs it upon a tree, where the evil spirit is supposed to reside. It is generally destroyed by ants, or birds of prey; but if it should survive three days, which of course rarely occurs, the mother takes it home and nurses it again!

There is one more crime which is strictly of a Pagan character, and that is, the destruction of children before their birth. It is a known fact, that always in every large bazaar of British India, there are individuals who gain their livelihood by making, selling, and administering drugs for this iniquitous purpose. It would be a great blessing, if the enlightened government of that land would pay some attention to this melancholy subject; although we feel convinced that these dark shadows of an inveterate demoralization must be scattered, and can be overcome only, by the influence of the leaven of the gospel, which is at work in the mass of people in that country.

How precious Christianity appears when we consider the social influence of that heaven-born Religion

upon the condition of the world! Let us hear, in conclusion of the above reflections, what that excellent man, Bishop Athanasius, could declare of the influence of the gospel in his own day. He saith: "Who is there amongst mortal men that could hope to penetrate to the Scythians, the Ethiopians, the Persians, the Armenians, the Goths, the Egyptians, the Chaldeans, and the inhabitants beyond the ocean, and preach against the worship of idols with courage and wisdom? Who could have done this, but the Lord of the universe, the power of God, and that of our Lord Jesus Christ? He sent not only his disciples to preach, but he convinced those nations of their errors, so that they sacrificed no longer to the deities of their fathers, but abandoned their fierce manners and practices. When, formerly, the Greeks and the barbarians served their idols, they lived in perpetual feuds one with the other. They were exercising cruelties against their own relatives. No one could travel across land or sea without being armed. Their whole existence was a military exercise; the sword was their staff, and the support of all their hopes. And, although they diligently served their gods amidst all these things, it could not change their sentiments and manners. But scarcely had they embraced the doctrines of Christ,—scarcely had their hearts been made to feel a contrition by their miraculous influence, when all their murderous propensities and barbarian manners disappeared. What mere man could have ventured

thus to oppose all idolatry, with the whole army of demons, all the magic and all the Grecian wisdom, and to subdue it with one single and mighty effort?"

And Justin Martyr could declare before the enemies of the Cross: "We did once live in pleasure and sin, but now we aim after purity of life; we did once use magical powers, but now we have devoted ourselves to the eternal and gracious God. We once loved filthy lucre more than others, but we now communicate what we have to the poor and needy. We once hated and murdered each other, and declined to have any fellowship with strangers; now we do not hesitate, after the appearance of Christ, to live together with them in harmony. We pray for our enemies, and endeavour to lead those that hate us to receive the doctrine of Christ, and partake of the same blessed hope, which we have received from Almighty God."

6. Lest, however, there remain a doubt upon our minds as to the fact that Paganism is directly answerable for the havoc which has been caused in the moral, civil, and social condition of mankind, we will allude, finally, to the circumstance of Paganism having always enforced cruel immolations under the pretence of divine authority. We have already alluded to the universality of sacrifices, and the traditional accounts are strongly in favour of the proposition that they all spring from one common source. *Thoth*, in Egypt, is mentioned as the author of sacrifices. In Italy, *Janus*

was considered to have first taught men to build temples to the gods, and to have instituted the sacred rites with which they were adored. The Argive *Phoroneus*, who was considered the parent of men, is said to have been the first who built a temple and an altar for sacrificial rites in honour of Juno. Thus the Chinese *Fohi* is represented as breeding seven sorts of animals, the number according to which Noah was directed to take the clean animals into the ark, of which he sacrificed to God Almighty. *Deucalion* is equally described as building an altar, and as offering up sacrifices immediately after the deluge. The British *Hu*, who sailed with his seven companions in an ark over the interminable ocean, is styled emphatically the *Sacrificer*. And by sacrifices the Peruvian *Manco Capac* is supposed to have first reclaimed mankind from a savage life, and to have taught them the worship of his father the sun!

In short, the traditional accounts of the origin of sacrifices, as it is given in Pagan systems, distinctly show that it was derived from one or the other of the ante or the post-diluvian patriarchs, Adam or Noah, or from both together. After the coming of the Messiah was promised, propitiatory sacrifices were immediately instituted; not that it is possible for the blood of bulls and of goats to take away sin, but as a divine shadow of things to come, and of Him who was to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. Sacrifices were commanded, to keep up the remembrance of sin, and to

declare that without shedding of blood there can be no remission of sin. But this commandment, as every other revealed truth, became soon corrupted in the hand of Paganism. The sign itself was suddenly more trusted in than the thing signified. (Gen. iv. 5.) When by degrees God was more lost sight of by man, sacrifices continued, but they were sadly perverted into a powerful instrument of Satan and his kingdom. Spurious creeds having no other principle by which to regulate their expiations, but the nature of the transgression, not only created a very costly worship, but also originated the unnatural practice of sacrificing men, women, and children! The sacrifices were now performed upon a false principle: it was no longer a "remembrance of sin," but a means of perpetuating crimes more absurd and unnatural than those which were intended to be expiated and removed by the sacrifice.

It is not known when and where the custom of offering human sacrifices was first practised; but that it existed at a very early period is proved from the Mosaic records. The Canaanites were in the habit of committing this abomination more than three thousand three hundred years ago. In spite of the strongest prohibitions of Jehovah, their example was now and then followed by the Israelites; especially by two of their kings, Ahaz and Manasseh, who "*sacrificed their sons and daughters unto devils, and shed innocent blood, even the blood of their sons and of their daughters,*

whom they sacrificed unto the idols of Canaan." (2 Kings xvi. Psalm cvi. 37, 38.)

The general leading idea of the Pagans in sacrificing was, that, as the wrath of the *deity must be propitiated,* such a propitiation was best effected by the shedding the blood of the devoted victim. How opposed this idea is to that of genuine Religion, has been already shown. We hear of Pagans endeavouring to *appease* the wrath of the deities with bulls and lambs, with blood and slaughter, with the sacrifice of animals, and of human beings!

The Ethiopians, the Phœnicians, the Scythians, the Celts, the Chinese, the Egyptians, the Peruvians, the Hindoos, the Greeks, the Latins, the Carthaginians, the Canaanites, the Arabians, the Persians, the Cretans, the Cyprians, the Rhodians, the Africans, the Mexicans, and the islanders of the Pacific Ocean, have all polluted, or are still polluting, their religious exercises with the abominations of *human sacrifices!*

Amongst the ancient Greeks, the immolation of a human victim either previous to the commencement of a voyage or after its successful termination, agreeably to a vow which had been made in the hour of danger, was a common practice. Thus, for instance, was Iphigenia given up by her father Agamemnon, to procure a favourable wind to waft him to the shores of Troy; and a similar sacrifice was demanded on his return. The Athenians and the Massilians, in their remarkable annual sacrifice of a man, loaded the victim

with curses, and entreated that the wrath of their gods might fall upon his devoted head, and then cast him into the sea, as an offering to Neptune. Menelaus, being detained in Egypt by contrary winds, offered up two Egyptian children; whilst, according to the ancient historians, every Grecian state formerly made it a rule, before they marched towards an enemy, to solicit a blessing on their undertaking by the sacrifices of human victims.

In Rhodes a man was sacrificed to Kronos on the 6th of July. In Salamis a human being was slaughtered to Agraulus, the son of Poseidon, in the month of March; and afterwards the same rites were performed in honour of Diomedes. The youth who was chosen for the purpose was pierced by the lance of a priest, after he had been led three times round the altar; and his corpse was burned with fire. Aristomenes, the Messinian, sacrificed to Jupiter at Ithome, Lacedæmonians with their king Theopompus! In Chios and Tenedos a man was offered to Dionysus by being torn in pieces. In Lacedæmonia also, according to Apollodorus, human sacrifice was offered to Ares. The ancient inhabitants of the Crimea were accustomed to sacrifice to Diana every stranger shipwrecked on their coasts, by striking the victim on the head with a club. The Pelasgians, in a time of scarcity, offered up the *tenth of their children*, in hopes of procuring plenty. The Taurians, like the people of Crimea, sacrificed to Artemis every stranger that was cast

on their coast. At Pella, in Thessalia, human sacrifices occurred. Erechtheus, in Attica, sacrificed his two daughters to Persephone. Even Aristides sacrificed to Dionysus the three sons of the sister of the King of Persia, whom he had taken captives. Themistocles also sacrificed several noble Persians.

Though polite and civilized, and the admiration of the whole world for their laws, literature, and science, the *Romans* sacrificed human beings for centuries! According to Dionysius Halicarnassus, the Romans were in the habit, about the middle of May, of going in procession to the Tiber, to cast thirty images of men into the river, in memory of former sacrifices of real men. According to Livy, there were buried alive two men and two women, natives of Gaul and Greece, to avert public calamity from the state. And well said Lactantius respecting this case; "How could the Gods be more favourable to them now, when they attempted to obtain their favour by such cruel means as these?" According to Plutarch, a similar crime was committed in the times of Flaminius and Turius; whilst there is strong reason to believe that the principal captives which graced the Roman triumphs were afterwards immolated at the altar of Jupiter Capitolinus. Caius Marius is mentioned as having offered up his own daughter Calpurnia as a victim, in order to ensure success in a battle against the Cimbri; and to these many more examples might be added. The frequency and publicity of these criminal deeds of

blood under the sanction of Religion, is fully shown by the necessity which existed in the year 96 B.C. to enact a law prohibiting their continuance, which, however, seems to have been far from effecting a remedy—as Augustus Heliogabalus and Aurelian are accused of having followed this inhuman custom; and as, above three centuries after its prohibition, a man was annually sacrificed at the shrine of Jupiter; and as Lactantius was able to declare, about 300 A.D., that the said deity was still worshipped by the shedding of human blood.

The ancient kings of Tyre were accustomed, in times of great danger and calamity, to sacrifice their sons, and one of them procured divine honours by this bloody deed! El, or Saturnus, when the nation was endangered by a perilous war, dressed up his son in the emblems of royalty, and offered him up on an altar specially prepared for that purpose. There is a parallel case recorded in Scripture, according to which the king of the Moabites, when pressed by the successful progress of the Israelites, devoted his eldest son as an offering. (2 Kings iii.) The examples of kings were followed by other individuals, who were desirous of averting from themselves any calamity they feared; and those who had no children, would even purchase them from the poor for that purpose! That the Israelites also polluted their history by adopting these crimes from their neighbours, has been already adverted to.

The Carthaginians learned this cruel practice from their ancestors, the Tyrians; and numerous are the instances recorded in which they sacrificed children in the time of pestilence and other public calamities. When Agathocles was about to besiege their city, its inhabitants, imputing their misfortunes to the anger of Saturn on account of having been served only with the children of slaves and strangers, now endeavoured to atone for this neglect by sacrificing two hundred children of the best families of "enlightened" and civilized Carthage, by placing them upon the arms of a glowing brazen statue, which being turned downwards allowed the child to fall off into the furnace at its feet! In addition to this wholesale slaughter, three hundred citizens devoted themselves to the same fate! little remembering that such "*sacrifices God would not!*" Children were thus sacrificed down to the third century of the Christian era, when Tiberius hanged the sacrificing priests themselves, on crosses made of the trees which shaded their temples as houses of murder. We have, indeed, evidence that it was secretly performed down to the time of Tertullian, who states that in his day human sacrifices were common in Arcadia and Carthage.

When the Chinese were suffering from a famine which lasted seven years, and when it was declared that only human sacrifices could avert the calamity of the nation, the aged king Ching-Tang offered himself for that purpose; but it is said that the will was accepted

for the deed. In Tunquin, children are annually killed by cutting them into two equal halves, or by the administration of poison, in order to induce the gods to grant a plentiful harvest. In Laos no temples are built without throwing into the foundation those that happen first to pass by! It is likewise not uncommon among the Chinese to throw children into the river as sacrifices to the water.

The Hindoo Religion has been defiled by the blood of men to a fearful extent. Since the ascendency of the Muhammedan and European powers, human sacrifices have been greatly suppressed. But even until very lately several victims have been at various times discovered, who had evidently been offered up during the preceding night at the shrines of various deities. This seems natural to every one acquainted with its literature and the working of its system. Nor can we judge it to be a "*Religion of love*," when we hear of the numerous kinds of self-immolation which have been practised in former days. Many are still in practice among them, but are too well known to demand our giving any particulars. Hindooism, above all other systems, demands abominable sacrifices from its votaries.

Annestris, one of the wives of Xerxes, ordered fourteen children of noble birth to be buried alive, as a thank-offering for her reaching a happy age! That the Egyptians sacrificed *red-haired* men has been mentioned on a former occasion. When in the dog-days the glowing heat singed every green object,

they burned human sacrifices to appease Typhon! During the period of the *Hyksos*, three individuals were daily sacrificed; and Manetho expressly mentions that the king Amasis, who expelled them, ordered that three candles should daily be burned instead.

It is likewise clear that the northern Mythology required human sacrifices. Harold slew two of his children in order to obtain such a storm as would destroy the fleet of the King of Denmark. Another king killed nine sons, in hopes of adding to the length of his own life. Two kings, Domalder and Olaus Triliger, on whom fell the lot, were sacrificed by their own subjects with great rejoicings.

It was as late as the tenth century of the Christian era that in Russia a man was chosen by lot to appease by his death the wrath of the gods!

In Sedu, a place in Zealand, ninety-nine persons were annually sacrified to the god Swantowite. And some writers affirm, in speaking of the grove of Upsal, where these horrid rites were celebrated, that there was not a single tree which was not reverenced as a deity, because they were all stained with human blood. In Sweden there was every nine years a national festival, which lasted nine days, and on each day were sacrificed a man and seven kinds of animals, so that they offered eight times nine, or seventy-two, victims. The Danes likewise had a similar festival every nine years, in January, on which they sacrificed at the capital, Lede-

rum, ninety-nine men, ninety-nine horses, ninety-nine dogs, ninety-nine cocks, and ninety-nine hawks.

The Scandinavians vowed before their wars to sacrifice all the captives to Odin, in case he would grant unto them the victory over their enemies. The Slavonian priests drank the blood of sacrificed enemies, in order to obtain the gifts of divination! The mode of sacrificing was different by different tribes. The Galli killed the victim by the stroke of an axe. At other times the priests cut the victim down from behind, in order to obtain from the convulsions of the dying individual divinations as to the lucky or unlucky result of certain undertakings. The Celts placed the poor victim on a block or altar, with his breast upwards, and killed him with a sword. The Cimbri destroyed the devoted individuals by ripping open the bowels. In Norway they knocked out his brains with the yoke of an ox. In Iceland, they dashed the victim against an altar of stone; in other places, they pierced him with arrows; and again, in other places, they were placed within huge colossuses of twigs, and burned alive.

From the testimony of antiquity, we fear that the *ancient Britons* were in nowise behind in these cruel deeds of religious worship. Especially was the interesting Isle of Man the scene of barbarous cruelty! We are particularly told that upon it were sacrificed those that were taken captive from the ranks of the enemy!

According to Cæsar, it was not unusual for Gallic

youth to be sent over to that island for instruction in the Druidical rites. According to Tacitus, the Britons were in the habit of embruing their altars in the blood of their prisoners; and exploring the will and pleasure of the gods in the entrails of human victims! The Romans are said to have dealt with the greatest severity against the Druidical priests of Gaul and Britain, because they considered them as the chief instigators of human sacrifices! What great things God hath wrought upon this island by his glorious gospel!

In the midst of wealth and luxury, and many of the polished arts of life, Montezuma, the last emperor of Mexico, offered human sacrifices. All the captives were sacrificed to the gods; and it thus happened that thousands of victims were slain to the bloodthirsty divinities.

The deity Tezcalepoca, who, similar to the Brahm of the Hindoos, was called "the soul of the world," deserves particular mention. A year before the celebration of his festivals, which were always stained by these horrid crimes, a captive, distinguished for his personal beauty, was selected to represent this deity. His guardians instructed him how to perform this new part with becoming grace and dignity. He was dressed in most gaudy apparel, and perfumed with all manner of odoriferous substances. When he went out he was escorted by a train of the royal pages, and as he halted in the streets to play some favourite melody, he received the homage of the multitudes. He feasted

at the banquets of the nobles of the land, received from them divine honours, and led a most easy and luxurious life till within a month of his sacrifice.

As the fatal hour drew nigh, one of the royal barges transported him across the lake to a temple which rose on its margin, about a league from the city. As the procession wound up the sides of the pyramid, the victim threw away his gay chaplets of flowers, and broke in pieces the musical instruments with which he had charmed the ears of adoring multitudes. On the summit he was received by six priests, who were habited in sable robes. They led him to the sacrificial stone, a huge block of jasper, with its upper surface somewhat convex. On this the prisoner was stretched; five priests secured his head and his limbs, whilst the sixth, clad in a scarlet mantle, dexterously opened the chest of the victim with a stone knife, and inserting his hand in the wound, tore out the palpitating heart. Having presented it to the sun, he threw it into the face of the idol, whilst the multitudes below prostrated themselves in humble adoration. The corpse was allowed to roll down the steps of the temple.

Sometimes preliminary tortures of the most exquisite kind were inflicted upon the victim, but they always terminated with the bloody ceremony above described. Women, as well as the other sex, were sometimes reserved for sacrifice. On some occasions, particularly in seasons of drought, at the festival of

the insatiable Tlaloc, the god of rain, children, for the most part infants, were offered up. As they were borne along in litters, dressed in fine robes and decked with the fresh blossoms of spring, they moved the hardest heart, though, as was the case with infants sacrificed to Moloch, their cries were drowned in the tumultuous music and chant of the priests, who read in their tears a favourable augury for their petition. These innocent victims were generally bought by the priests from their poor parents.

The remains of the victims who were taken captive were delivered to the warrior who had taken them in battle, and by him they were served up in a banquet prepared with art, and attended by both sexes of his friends!

Human sacrifices reached the utmost height on the accursed altars of Mexico, which form a horribly dark and indelible stain in the history of humanity! Scarcely any author pretends to estimate the yearly sacrifices at less than twenty thousand, and some carry the number as high as fifty. On great occasions, as the coronation of a king or the consecration of a temple, the number becomes still more appalling. At the dedication of the great temple Huitzilopotchli in 1486, the prisoners, who for some years had been reserved for the purpose, were drawn from all quarters to the capital. They were ranged in files, forming a procession nearly two miles long. The ceremony lasted for several days, and seventy thousand captives

are said to have perished at the shrine of the Mexican Moloch! It was customary to preserve the skulls of the sacrificed in buildings appointed to the purpose. The companions of Cortés, the conqueror of Mexico, counted one hundred and thirty-six thousand of these grinning horrors in one of these edifices! If no human sacrifices had been offered for some time, the priests sent word to the ruler that the "*gods were hungry*," and he sent at once to make captives for this abominable purpose. When Montezuma was asked, "Why he had suffered the republic of Tlascala to maintain her independence on his borders," he replied, "That she might furnish him with victims for his gods!" Such is the spirit of Paganism! These horrors blacken the history of a people who had a regular government, and were considerably advanced in civilization.

Human sacrifices are found all over the vast continent of benighted Africa. The Fetish of the Fantih tribes demands a human sacrifice every new moon up to this present day. It has been likewise found to have existed upon every newly discovered island of the Pacific Ocean. In Otaheite, human sacrifices were offered in appalling numbers to the gods, after the eye of the victim had been presented to the king, who pretended to eat it!

The Marquesans, the inhabitants of Paliser Islands, the Harvey islanders, and the New Zealanders, were not only accustomed to sacrifice their enemies within the last fifty years, but, like the Mexicans, to devour

them; a practice which is still believed to exist in different parts of Polynesia, and in central Africa.

In Peru, two hundred children were annually sacrificed for the health of Yuka; and in cases of sickness, it was usual among the Peruvians to offer up their sons to Virachoca, beseeching him to spare their lives, and to be satisfied with the blood of their children.

In taking this general view of the cruel sacrificial rites of the Pagan world, we have confined ourselves to a few facts, in order to show that there is an organized system which demands the sacrifice of our fellow-men unto devils. The Pagan world had some faint idea of the vicarious nature and virtue of these sacrifices. It has been particularly well expressed by one Pagan writer, who describes the purport of sacrifices in general by intimating, that the heart of the victim was intended to serve as a substitute for the heart of the offerer; the fibres of the victim for the fibres of the sacrificer; the life of the being sacrificed, for the life of the being who sacrificed! Another declares it to have been the traditional belief, that sacrifices were resorted to in such cases as required life for life!

We discover, therefore, in the midst of these cruel rites of Paganism, another going forth of the yearning of a guilty conscience after the true sacrifice, which alone could take away sin. We discover still more, in the cruel choice of innocent little children for sacrificial purposes, a loud testimony as to the necessary quali-

fication, and the spotless character of the mediatorial and atoning sacrifice, of which mankind stood in need.

Sacrifices and oblations were originally a Divine ordinance, but the piacular sacrifices of genuine Religion only shadowed forth the expiatory oblation of a nobler sacrifice. We learn, however, from the general prevalence of human sacrifices and animal immolation, the necessity of a far superior victim, which, being Divine as well as human, should once for all be able to carry our sins into the wilderness of forgetfulness, after a full oblation, sacrifice, and atonement had been made for the sins of the whole world; also for the sins of those cruel sacrifices which Paganism has enforced upon its deluded votaries in search of happiness and peace.

If the truth of the *Christian Religion* be thus established by the attestation of God and man, as it has ever been, it is then a *Religion* for us, our children, our nation, our race, and the world at large; and it behoves us as Christian men, not only to review and examine the martial bands of Gospel foes, and to scrutinize their position; not only to repel their occasional attacks, and to spy the nakedness of the land; but also to march boldly amongst their ranks, and to commence and carry on the battles of the Lord. It is, then, our *religious* duty, having put on the whole armour of God, to pull down those strongholds which superstition has reared in ancient and modern days, and which have been fortified by hoary

antiquity, and by arguments, which loudly proclaim how deeply man has been injured, and how seriously his mind and his intellect have been shattered and broken by the fall.

Instead therefore of merely *defending the Gospel*, it is the duty of the Christian believer to carry the "controversy which the Lord has with the nations" abroad into the midst of them. The days, indeed, appear to be fast disappearing, when the best flowers of Christian activity and energy withered over internal disputes, and not unfrequently over "*foolish questions*," that gender strife and kindle the fire of discord in the bosom of that body, the Church, to which peace was bequeathed by Christ as an abiding legacy. If, however, in a spirit of charity, we absolve our forefathers of a sinful indifference to the world at large, and ascribe their forgetfulness of the Heathen and Mohammedan world to a laudable anxiety to watch over the household of faith, to defend their sacred trust against home-bred schisms and damnable heresies, this can no longer be done in our days, when, comparatively speaking, the Lord has given "peace to Israel," and when the increasing influence of Christian power and civilization is bringing Christian men into such close contact with immortal fellow-creatures still enslaved by every species of superstition.

When our adorable Saviour was about to ascend to heaven, he lifted up his pierced hands to bless the little flock of his chosen Apostles, and breaking for

ever down the middle wall of partition between Jews and Gentiles, he commanded: "Go YE INTO ALL THE WORLD, AND PREACH THE GOSPEL TO EVERY CREATURE!" Ever since that memorable day, the everlasting Gospel has been flying through space and time, preaching peace to us that were afar off, and to them that were nigh! O for that blessed Gospel, and O for that exalted name at which every knee shall bow! Take away that adorable name, and we are without God in this world, and without hope in the world which is to come! If we take away the Gospel from the troubled conscience, if we take away the blood of sprinkling from the contrite heart, we abandon the world to everlasting anguish, to everlasting death, and to everlasting despair!

The obligation to *preach* the Gospel to every creature has been as much the duty of the Church of Christ, as it has been her privilege to enjoy its blessings.

The duty to evangelize the world rests upon the same grounds as the obligation to commemorate the Lord's death until he cometh. We have a distinct command in both cases. "*Do this in remembrance of me!*" is the command for the one; "*Go and preach the Gospel to every creature!*" is the reason for the other. Hence the cause of Christianising the nations of the globe by no means rests upon the mere benevolent principles of some philanthropic body of men; nor is it the success of Christian Missions by which the obligation can be measured. It is not, perhaps, to be

expected, that the several systems of spurious Religion will be thoroughly eradicated prior to the second coming of our Lord. Christianity will indeed be universally received; Christ will go forth conquering and to conquer; for it is on this noble consummation that prophecy pours its most animated strains.

But we must not expect from human exertions what is reserved for the visible making bare of the arm of the Lord. Yet, if there be truth in prophecy, the end cannot come, and the glorious and palmy days of Christianity cannot be introduced, until the Gospel has been preached to every creature! The message of God must be preached for a witness in every habitable part of the globe. And as soon as there has gone through a land a proclamation of the Gospel message, the inhabitants of that land have passed the demarcation line between willing and unavoidable ignorance. An important change is wrought in the moral position of the Gentile world. They may reject the message, and cleave to idolatry; but they henceforth stand in a new moral position, inasmuch as they will be classed at the last great day of reckoning with those to whom the Gospel was preached in vain.

There are, however, other motives to urge every member of the Church of God to take part in the great work, which has for its immediate object the spread of Gospel principles through every land, and the triumph of Gospel grace in every heart. God's word shall not return vain, but it will accomplish that for

which it is sent. Now, if we estimate the Mohammedan and Pagan world at about six hundred millions, and if we assume that a generation ordinarily lasts thirty years, we arrive at the appalling conclusion, that no fewer than fifty-four thousand of immortal sinners die *every day*, without knowledge of the only name whereby we must be saved! They pass through life without God, without understanding, without natural affection; and when they appear before the bar of judgment at that great day for which all other days are made, they are said to be without excuse! The Pagans are sinners without a Saviour; they are children of sorrow, without a drop of comfort to refresh their souls when tossed to and fro by the fierce waves of affliction. They feel the rebukes of a guilty conscience, without knowledge of that precious blood which cleanseth from all sins. Shall we refuse to fulfil the command of our ascending Lord and King, and deny them the crumbs that fall from our table?

What was this favoured land before it had pleased God to kindle the sympathy and to inflame the pious zeal of foreign Christians to visit its shores, and to sound the silver trumpet of the jubilee to its benighted and savage inhabitants? The praise of British zeal and English liberality in behalf of the propagation of Christianity and civilization amongst Pagan nations is, indeed, in all the Churches. But the Church of Christ in this land expects every one of her members to do his duty. Oh, therefore, for the

anointing Spirit and his cloven tongues to dispel the lethargy, the slothfulness, and the sinful indifference, we feel in our Master's service! "*Curse ye Meroz, said the angel of the Lord, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof; because they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty.*" (Judges v. 23.) The inhabitants of Meroz were cursed bitterly because they *did nothing!* Be therefore diligent in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord. Stand not idle in the market the whole day. The time is short. Work whilst it is day. Hold fast the sword of the Spirit, until you carry the palm of victory. Desire no rest until you enter into that which remaineth for the people of God. Put on the whole armour of God, until you walk amidst the great multitude in spotless white. So live for Christ, so travail in his service, that the world may miss you when you are removed. Or whether this world may miss you or not, so live to Him who died for you, that when you fall asleep in Jesus, a voice may be heard from heaven, saying, "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them!"

And may the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep our hearts and minds in the knowledge and in the love of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

APPENDIX.

Catalogue of Works chiefly consulted previous to the publication of the present Work.

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2. Veterum Persarum et Parthorum et Mediorum Religionis Historia. Thomas Hyde.
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